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SHARED FACILITIES, SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY:

PRACTICE AND IMPLICATIONS

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B. Phil.
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ABSTRACT

"Shared Facilities" -- an exciting educational experience or a political manoeuvre for economic expediency? In the fifty years since Henry Morris promoted the concept of opening the school to the community, his idea has been interpreted in many forms.

This research was intended to examine the various methods used in England and Wales to implement the philosophy of "shared use" of school premises. The examination of the schemes in operation shows their varying characteristics according to the local authorities' individual interpretations of the concept of the community school.

Apart from a fairly extensive system of Community Colleges in Cambridgeshire, a legacy of Henry Morris, community schools were not widely developed until the Plowden Commission Report on Primary Education (1967) recommended that the idea of community schools should be promoted as part of an attempt to involve parents more closely in the education of their children. Plowden asserted the importance of discovering ways of linking home and school and of gaining the understanding and support of parents through an active involvement with the school rather than a passive acceptance of the school's policies. This need was felt to be greatest in "educational priority areas", i.e. areas with poor housing and social conditions.

L.E.As were further encouraged to consider the establishment of community schools in the Ministry Circular 2/70, "A Chance to Share".

One interpretation of "community school" is that of "shared use", i.e. opening the school premises and facilities to the wider community. In the investigation an attempt will be made to discover whether "shared use" does encourage parents to become involved in the education of their children through their increased contact with the school. The investigations at Boldon and Hedworthfield were an attempt to discover whether parental contact with the school through "shared use" significantly benefited child and school.

Following a pilot survey conducted at Hedworthfield School, the Boldon survey included a questionnaire to parents of pupils in the school, observation of the scheme in operation, discussions with participants and a thorough investigation of all the literature pertaining to the inception of the scheme.

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CHAPTER 1

THE CONCEPT OF SHARED FACILITIES

In examining the concept of "shared facilities" we may begin by pursuing the premise suggested by John Vaizey: "Schools will become much more open to the rest of the community. The school building could conceivably be the community centre, open all day and every day, not only for the teaching of children but for classes for adults in vocational and recreational subjects, with gymnasium, playing fields, swimming pools all available to the local neighbourhood for extensive use."¹

These suggestions put forward by John Vaizey in 1965 are implied in the recommendations of Ministry Circular 2/70, "A Chance to Share". Few could argue with the physical nature of these recommendations. The investigation is concerned with the wider implications and potential influence the shared use of schools could have upon the educational process.

We may ask the question - are "shared facility" schemes a 'trendy' innovation or will they provide some of the stability and neighbourly contact which some children may not otherwise experience? Has the educational philosophy and religious belief of Henry Morris, the pioneer of the community college, been truly interpreted or have the recommendations of Ministry Circular 2/70, "A Chance to Share", been promoted as a matter of economic

1 Vaizey, J. The Economics of Education. Faber, 1962.

expediency? It is perhaps noteworthy that the major advances in this educational concept were during the periods of national growth in the optimistic eras of the 1920s and early 1930s and more rapidly in the "never had it so good" period of the 1950s and 1960s. It is interesting to note that following the innovation of the latter period we are now examining, perhaps more closely than ever before, the aims and objectives within our schools. Of the numerous new educational concepts introduced during that period, many of which have been severely criticised, little is to be found in the way of condemnatory comment about the concept of shared facilities and the growth of the community concept of education continues, if somewhat cautiously, in the United Kingdom. We have a national policy for education and that policy is interpreted and implemented by local authorities. For shared facilities schemes to develop in England and Wales it is the local authority that must be the key unless Parliament makes these a requirement.

The term "Shared Facilities" may lead to a great debate because of the different interpretations of it by various local authorities in England and Wales. For the purpose of this study the criteria used by George and Teresa Smith, Community Schools in England and Wales (1975) will form a basic framework for the writer's assessment of the "shared use" schemes he has examined.

"First the term 'community school' can be applied to a school which serves an entire neighbourhood; most primary schools and more and more secondary neighbourhood schools would qualify.

A second definition is a school which shares its premises with the community. Large modern comprehensive schools obviously have bigger and better facilities to offer, such as swimming pools and libraries.

A third possibility is a school which develops a curriculum of community study, arguing for the social and educational relevance of local and familiar material.

A fourth type is a school where there is some degree of community control. This is familiar in the United States, particularly following the Ford Foundation supported programmes for community control of inner city schools in the late 1960s, but less so in this country, outside a few Free Schools and L.E.As experimenting with greater community participation on governing boards.

A fifth and final possibility is a school which seeks to involve itself in promoting social change within the local community. This type incorporates some of the earlier varieties, as it could well include longer opening hours, community use of buildings, and community participation."²

The writers emphasise that probably no school would fall exactly into one of these categories but would probably be a combination of two or even more of them.

It would seem logical that the facilities schools have to offer should be properly shared by us all and, accepting this, some form of common policy appears necessary. The lack of such a policy could provide the opportunity for decisions ruled by administrative convenience, a situation regrettably often found.

In the current debate on education it has been suggested that the work of the school should be more than purely educational and that the vocational aspects of the curriculum and organisation of the school are becoming increasingly important. The school aims to equip young people for life both now and later as adults, so that when they are at school they are happy and secure and motivated to

2 Smith, G. and T. Community Schools in England and Wales - A Review. Scottish Education Department, 1974, p. 5.

develop themselves to the full. When they leave they should be adequately prepared to get an appropriate job or go on to Higher Education. They should know how to deal with the problems of being a young adult so that they feel they are acceptable to society, can take a place in it, play a part in changing it for the better and can live with themselves.

Perhaps the most vexing problem facing educationalists today is that of motivation of pupils. Once a problem most clearly defined among culturally deprived youngsters, it has now become apparent throughout the whole ability range. There is a need in the very near future to find strong incentives and effective ways of influencing attitudes. To this end it is suggested that the school curriculum should be open in the sense that a wide variety of activities may be accepted as educationally valuable, and educational worth should not be restricted to the traditional scholastic discipline. It is not suggested by the writer that the study will answer the challenges facing schools today and care will be taken to examine the benefits to be derived from 'shared facilities' without making over optimistic claims. Within the study reference will be made to the effect of sharing of facilities upon the work of the school and, to differing degrees, upon the curriculum.

Henry Morris built his Village College plan upon the concept that education was a life long process which began in the cradle and ended in the grave, the school being the focus for educational, social and recreational services. Another major educational force leading to a concern with community education and encouraging a

wider use of the school resource was the Plowden Committee's Report on Primary Education (1967).

Plowden reported on 'educational priority areas' in which housing conditions and levels of income on one side and motivational factors like parental lack of knowledge on the other combined to produce "educationally deprived" children. One of the Plowden recommendations was that the 'community school' be tried as a vehicle for involving parents in their children's schooling. An important factor which is emerging at the present time is that the school may be the only institution, other than his family, with which the youngster has a link. In cases where the family fails, the school is left with the difficult task of guidance and counselling.

Such studies as Dr. J.W.B. Douglas's "The Home and the School", the work of Professor S. Wiseman and his colleagues reported in "Education and Environment" and the Plowden Commission Report on Primary Education (1967) suggest that where parents have been involved in the school organisation or show an active interest in the educational process there is a greater achievement on the part of the pupil. Jackson and Marsden, in "Education and the Working Class", examined how the educationally experienced parent contributed to the child's progress up the educational ladder. They also described the diffidence and difficulties that parents who lacked a personal background of education had in contacting the school and obtaining any adequate information to compensate for their own ignorance.

These studies suggest that the climate of the school is a factor of prime importance which may have a major effect upon motivation

and thereby achievement. It is therefore important to understand the process by which a pupil affiliates with or alienates himself from the school.

"To make social education effective we must begin with the individual child. What the pupil needs is the chance to learn about himself and the community where he lives. We are becoming more aware of the great importance of the social context in which education is being experienced by the pupils, but we are not always prepared to accept the important effect it has on their achievement. It is necessary to study not only the physical environment of home, neighbourhood and school but the attitudes and values of the adults who live and work in them."³

The area of relationships between the school and the community and in particular between parents and teachers is one which is not without difficulty. The importance of good home-school relationships is widely accepted but the best methods of achieving this have yet to be agreed. It may be questioned whether parent-teacher relationships can be changed without altering the structure of schools and the pattern of control and authority.

The writer will survey the development of the concept of shared facilities in the United Kingdom over fifty years. It is hoped to examine the many forms this development has taken from the opening of Sawston College, Cambridgeshire in 1930 to the more recent schemes of the Sutton Centre, Nottinghamshire, and the Abraham Moss Centre in Manchester. The study will contain first hand information gained from the writer's involvement with the growth of the community school in Durham County supported by the findings of the Working Party set up to enquire into the implications of such a development.

3 McKenzie, R.F. A Question of Living. Collins, 1963.

Following the re-organisation of local government, the pilot schemes in Durham County were administered by South Tyneside and Sunderland. A special study will be made of the two schemes operating in South Tyneside with close examination of the practice and implications of shared facilities at Boldon Comprehensive School. The work will include a brief survey of the literature describing relationships between the home and the school, with a view to assessing the influence shared facilities may have upon these.

"Shared use" schemes, i.e. school sites which are used for a multiplicity of purposes, are usually referred to as "community schools". The term "community" has been linked with the school with the assumption that there is general agreement about the aims and functions implicit in the term. A study of community schools in this country indicates that the term may be used to cover a variety of concepts or any combination of them. These will be described in detail in a later chapter. Perhaps best understood is the concept of linking home and school, parent and teacher which stems from the official definition of community school in the Plowden Report. This interpretation of the term forms an important part of this study. It will also be found in the survey that the term may be used to describe community development, the restoring of community life in depressed urban areas, a concept with origins in the official defining of Educational Priority Areas. Perhaps less practised is the use of the school's neighbourhood as a resource and laboratory for learning. Prominent at the present time is the debate about the need to secure community involvement, which conveys the idea of deliberate planning and availability of all school and site resource for use by all sections of the neighbourhood.

The survey will indicate that community schools are a fairly recent phenomenon in our educational development and are still an area of great debate although it is acknowledged that the idea, in the form of multi-purpose educational building, is much older. The colliery school in Denaby Main, South Yorkshire was built by the local coal company as school, drill hall, religious meeting place, theatre and dance hall in 1893. Many village schools by the nature of their use may also have been labelled community schools.

Professor Ree in his book on Henry Morris⁴ attributes the use of the term to the extraordinary ideas of Morris of providing educational services for school children, youth and adults upon one site.

The needs of adult education following the 1944 Act, further strengthened by the Albermarle Report (1960), caused L.E.As to consider integrating the school, youth and adult establishments to mutual cost benefit. The concept of shared facilities took a further step forward following the Wolfenden Report (1960) which indicated the need to include within school building programmes, swimming pools and games halls together with provision for more adult orientated, senior pupil and wider community needs. The "Youth and Community Work in the 1970s" report underlined the need for youth wings attached to secondary schools and joint appointments involving youth work and teaching. Shared facilities had been visualised by many authorities as being concerned mainly with sport, but the publication of D.E.S. Circular 2/70, "A Chance to Share", accelerated development over a wider field, including music, drama and craft facilities.

4 Ree, H.A. Educator Extraordinary. Longmans, 1973.

This created new relationships in management structures of projects associated with the proposed joint provision. These schemes include extended public use both on a casual basis and in a more formal way through an education authority's youth and adult programme. In the document local education authorities were asked to review their arrangements for consultation and co-operation with other local authorities or with other departments within the same authority and also with bodies concerned with community facilities.

The Plowden Report (1967) emphasised the need for community provision as a social benefit. It emphasised the importance of parental involvement to extend educational influence through parent and community involvement and considered the community school to be one answer. Plowden, Seebohm, Halsey and Midwinter emphasised the need for community provision as a social benefit as well as in terms of practical economics.

It becomes apparent that, as the costs of schools increase, so the gap between cost and utilisation for merely educational purposes becomes politically and economically less defensible and this may help to establish larger numbers of shared use schemes. The joint planning concept began to gain momentum fourteen years ago when it became clear that the economic advantage could be substantial and make sense in terms of local authority budgets. Local Authorities began to realise that in the building of large schools they could also provide for leisure opportunities, especially if the school facilities were modified by the addition of financial resources other than those for school building, to allow the provision of recreation and social facilities not normally found in school plans.

From this developed community orientated schools which enabled individuals to satisfy their leisure requirements, not only through organised classes but through sessions arranged for family, club or society participation. The key then lay in management which was geared to creating community opportunity throughout the year.

Where authorities worked in a corporate or co-operative way they were able to extend the facilities of new schools. In particular, secondary schools enjoyed better facilities and opportunities than could previously have been provided within D.E.S. building cost limits. This also gave local communities a range of facilities not previously conceived when the authorities concerned planned and developed schools without consideration to wider community use.

From the early sixties there was increasing emphasis upon the design and management of schools, backed by additional finance often outside the Education Committee budget, which gave an increasing range of recreational facility for a wide range of age and specialist interest.

An early development in the planning of a new comprehensive school using an integration of District Council capital was at Egremont in Cumberland. During 1965 a community leisure centre was included in the plans of the new school involving a swimming pool, sports hall with climbing walls and a small concert hall with stage facilities. The integration of the public library emphasised the community approach.

Shortly after this Nottinghamshire modified the Physical Education Departments of four comprehensive schools, in partnership with District Councils, to provide leisure centres.

The fact that young people would return to 'school' in the evenings, week-ends and holidays, that parents, as regular users of the leisure centres, would show much more interest in the school function emphasised the social education potential of such schemes.

Some recent joint schemes have illustrated the opportunity for the new community school to become the core of comprehensive urban development, providing facilities for a vast range of physical, recreational and social opportunities, adjacent services for career advice, health, libraries and museums. When associated with the integration of sixth form and further education facilities, shops and appropriate parking spaces, and even a church, it becomes clear that the basic school provision may become the growth point of community development.

Although to date many schemes associated with secondary schools have centred upon leisure centres, a number of smaller projects have been developed representing a school social and education investment for the community. There is considerable interest in the many variations which have been developed around the theme of integrating community facilities with basic school provision.

Midwinter writes:

"The school and college reformed along lines of individual choice with a community orientation, could rightly be seen as an important aspect of community development and the movement towards participatory democracy. It is arguable that the school is the lowest common denominator of community life, in that everyone has been or is at school, everyone lives near a school, everyone in rates or taxes, supports schools and often one has or had a child at school."⁵

5 Midwinter, E. Education and the Community. Unwin, 1975, p. 128.

He advocates much more decision making and resource control (of local services) at local community level and suggests that education is in the strongest bargaining position for the delegation of powers of management to community level. It needs to be mentioned that the recent trend in parent governors/managers was disappointing in the lack of interest shown. Very few are prepared to submit their names to be put forward for nomination and often political undertones have been seen in the ultimate appointment. Midwinter indicates the importance of the teacher and parent delegates, that they should be sufficient in number and representative of the school.

Parent involvement in the functioning of the school in England and Wales appears to be far less than that in the United States or a number of European countries. Yet there are signs in this country of a growing interest in the role of the school in relation to the parent and the community. The Taylor Committee set up by Mr. Reg Prentice, the then Secretary of State for Education, was a recognition by the Government that there was a growing demand for an increase in involvement in the management of schools. A number of voluntary bodies similar to that of the National Parent-Teacher Association of the United States, were gaining widespread recognition in the United Kingdom. Organisations such as the Advisory Centre for Education and the National Confederation of Parent Teacher Associations were pressing for increased parental involvement in the management of schools. The findings of the Taylor Report and the subsequent White Paper, "The Composition of School Governing Bodies", presented to Parliament in December 1978, acknowledged the importance of Parent Governors.

Although the 1944 Education Act recognised the right of parents to have some say in the education of their children, particularly in religious matters, these rights were so hedged about with provisos that parents' wishes could in effect be ignored. The 1944 Act also provided for secondary education for all, and gradually, as parents themselves became better educated, they began to take more interest in the education of their children. By the end of the 1950s, interest was increasing rapidly, and it is significant that some of the movements involving parents and schools developed about that time. In the 1960s there also developed campaigns for comprehensive education, many of these initiated by parents who were concerned about the distress caused to children by selection. A number of voluntary organisations were formed to consider contact between home and school. The Advisory Centre for Education (A.C.E.) which publishes the magazine 'Where' was formed in 1962. The Confederation for the Advancement of State Education (C.A.S.E.) was asked to nominate a representative to the Plowden Committee. The National Confederation of Parent Teacher Associations (N.C.P.T.A.) was formed to advise P.T.As and similar groups. These three organisations founded the Home and School Council in 1967 which publishes termly papers on various aspects of home-school relationships.

It has become apparent in compiling this survey that there is no blue print for community schools: because of the challenge of the environment of each school, no two will be identical, even within the boundaries of South Tyneside, one of the smallest boroughs in the country. It is possible, however, to examine the examples of community schools throughout the country and identify common ground and conditions under which a community school is likely to function effectively.

CHAPTER 2

THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL IN PRACTICE

(i) Henry Morris and the Cambridgeshire College

Although the term "Community School" can be applied to schemes before the village colleges of Henry Morris, and to subsequent developments throughout the country, it is only recently that its use has become widespread. It is significant that the nature of the organisation of these schools differs. It is difficult to define the term 'Community School' and consequently unwise to attempt to describe any one scheme as being an example of a community school. It is possible however to lay down criteria for 'community schools' and then look at a number of different examples.

The assumptions set out in the Inspectorate Bulletin, "Community Schools", are useful in identifying types of community school and form useful guidelines when discussing examples.

"First is the acceptance of a school serving a complete geographic area. Second, a tendency which reinforces the first point, is that such schools are concerned with the complete age-group of an area. "Bussing" for example is seen by both American and English community school supporters as 'Anti Community'.

Third is the concern for a broad approach; education can no longer focus narrowly on a single range of skills, it has to affect other areas of social life. This means new forms of curriculum, new roles and institutions so that education can extend its influence into new areas.

Fourth, an obvious concomitant of the previous concern, is the aim for greater integration with other agencies working to the same and whether statutory or voluntary organisations. This is seen in the idea of multi-purpose centres, where education works alongside other agencies, and the growing number of joint appointments which tie schools more closely to other agencies.

Fifth, a less clear-cut element, is the idea of local control or accountability. This remains little more than an undercurrent of the 'Community School' idea, particularly as the large schemes are usually imposed as a top-down basis, but whatever the practice, there is undoubtedly a growing feeling that a community school has to be more accountable and responsive to local pressure than a conventional school."¹

In searching for a description and definition of community schools these assumptions may provide a framework to help in identifying existing schemes. It is apparent from the existing L.E.A. schemes to be described in operation, that they do not fall neatly into one category but often contain elements of each. A number of factors have contributed to the increased growth and development of community schools in the last decade. These include growth of the neighbourhood comprehensive catering for all children in relevant age groups with curriculum development relevant to the community based upon the child's experiences outside school in family and neighbourhood, and community control and involvement in the institution. An area of great debate is the community school as an agent of change. The way in which education is expected to respond to social problems has been reflected in the development of the community school. The Cambridgeshire Village Colleges were developed to counteract the attraction of the town and city by forming cultural and social provision at village level. The writer infers from his reading that more recently community schools have been developed partly in an attempt to solve some of the problems of juvenile delinquency, difficulties experienced in inner city life and more recently the question of parental involvement, participation and control.

¹ Smith, G. and T. Community Schools in England and Wales - A Review. H.M.S.O., 1975.

These are some of the principles which have contributed to the development of the community school. The aim of the study is to examine the way in which 'shared use' has contributed to achieving some of the objectives which have been outlined, to discover whether it is more than an exercise to save money. i.e. What opportunities for an enrichment of the educational process does the Community School provide other than the economical sharing of resources? In the 1970s an important feature of the development of the Community School movement was the building of large complexes planned and developed to provide more than a standard 9 to 4 provision with additional social facilities attached. The concept of 'shared facilities' appears to be moving forward, centred upon the design and construction of complexes encompassing within the school campus, youth provision, adult education and on occasion just about every possible community facility. At this stage it is important to consider the relationship between the school and the community from the viewpoint of the community and its needs. A 'Community School' should grow from these needs. The existence of community provision alone is not sufficient in itself, it is the nature of the organisation and use of this provision which is vital. George and Teresa Smith state:

"Too often a provision tends to be labelled a 'Community School' because of what it is - its mere existence in the neighbourhood will promote community development. In some ultimate sense this must be true, in that a community with extra facilities is by that fact a 'better' community. However there is a different approach which suggests that it is what a school does that makes it a community school."²

2 Smith, G. and T. op. cit.

It is characteristic of the development of education in England and Wales that local authorities have formed their interpretation of the needs of the community school very freely. It is significant that since 1944 the Youth Service and facilities for adult education have developed closer links with the school system. It is in these fields that national government has often given recommendations concerning the design and the nature of the community school. It can readily be seen how some local authorities have interpreted the Albermarle and Newsom Report in recommending joint use of schools. The first step towards community school development in a number of authorities was the construction of youth wings attached to existing buildings or provided for in plans for new schools. Both these reports, in particular Newsom, were concerned about the need to create meaningful and purposeful activities and relationships in school and they saw the integration of the youth service as one way in which this could be done. They envisaged joint use of schools providing an improvement in the work of the Youth Service by supplying additional resource and at the same time bringing change and benefit to the school.

The influence of national government upon the development of the community school has also been promulgated through their pronouncements upon Adult Education. After the Industrial Revolution the first signs of adult education for the working class became apparent through the development of such organisations as the Mechanics Institutes, Working Men's Colleges and the Workers' Education Association. Little was done by local education authorities outside of London prior to the Education Act of 1944. This laid upon the local education authority the duty to secure the provision

for their area of adequate facilities for further education, that is to say:

- (a) full-time and part-time education for persons over compulsory school age;
- (b) leisure-time occupation, in such organised cultural training or recreative activities as are suited to their requirements, for any persons over compulsory school age who are able and willing to profit by the facilities provided for that purpose.

Although for many years local centres of adult education have been based in secondary schools, it is only in recent years that there has been a move to integrate this provision within the school with the school itself. Where this has been done the tension which often existed between the daytime activities and evening use has been eased. Although the Technical College in many areas still provides the major centre for adult education, new comprehensive schools with their extensive facilities are acting increasingly as local centres. In addition to this, many new secondary schemes - Community Schools such as the Sutton Centre in Nottinghamshire and the Abraham Moss Centre in Manchester - have carefully considered the provision for adult education in their design and philosophy.

The community concept is not new to education in England and Wales but in the past decade the philosophy of shared use has gained momentum. An early pioneer of this idea was Henry Morris. Morris was concerned about the institutionalised nature of schools, his idea was to get rid of the insulated school and to provide for some of the social needs of the family, thereby strengthening its bond.

He showed himself to be aware of the need for youngsters to learn about themselves and the community in which they live. He hoped to re-invigorate the whole community by expanding the scope of education.

Henry Morris was a visionary in that not only did he see the school as a community centre for the neighbourhood but he perceived the need to develop practical subjects and vocational experience at school for the 'average child' before these needs were expressed in the Newsom Report of 1963. Reports published by him in the 1920s show that he was ahead of his time. In this early period as an administrator with Cambridgeshire he showed energetic political and diplomatic skill. His flamboyance and fund-raising excursions were major factors in the success of his ambitious scheme, "A Suggested Plan for Cambridgeshire". This proposed the immediate establishment of two 'village colleges' at Sawston and Bourne as pilot schemes, with a further eight to be located within the county. In this paper he was appealing to charitable trusts as well as to central government and his own committee. He gained some measure of success from the former, which in turn greatly influenced the latter. Central Government, however, showed some reluctance in accepting his scheme. It must be acknowledged that Henry Morris's ability to raise money from such institutions as the Carnegie Trust was probably more instrumental in the development of the Village College concept than the influential power behind the philosophy of such a scheme. It is fairly obvious that when his committee approved the scheme for the building of the first Village College at Sawston, the approval was won because members were told that the building of the College

would cost them little more than the repairs and improvements necessary to bring the existing Elementary School up to standard. With the opening of Sawston, the first village college in the world, by the Prince of Wales in 1930, Henry Morris gained wide publicity and recognition for his ambitious scheme of rural education. This was the first school of its size to have a separate hall, the first to have an adult wing, the first to have a library for shared use by the school and community, the first where the Youth Employment Office was housed in the school and where workshops, playing fields and medical services were available to all. Three further village colleges were built in the 1930s - Linton, Bottisham and Impington. Following the 1939-45 world war it was apparent that the influence of Morris, outside of his own administrative area, was limited. It would appear that his intellectual attitude irritated the practical people dealing with post-war development of housing and education. For example, those concerned with the development of new towns were not receptive to his ideas at this time. It may be that his impatience and academic rather than practical outlook served to set back the development of the community school especially in New Town Development.

However, almost fifty years since Henry Morris pioneered the idea of augmented premises at the local school being used by the whole community, the Village College in Cambridgeshire is still looked upon as an example of sound community development with maximum economy. A recent film produced by a consortium of Wardens of Village and Community Colleges argues that, given the right administrative structure, unitary control with a strong local Community Association

and a relatively small amount of additional finance, schools can provide ideal centres for the whole community - its children, its adults and its older people. The Cambridgeshire Village College today, more than Henry Morris perhaps envisaged, provides for the whole community. The Sawtry Village College operated a programme in 1978 which provided social and medical facilities for old people, a child health clinic, playgrounds, library, swimming pool, lunch time concerts, sports club, bowls club, youth club, scouts, army cadets, evening classes, ladies' keep fit, pottery, a community magazine, discos, dinners and a bar, together with a long list of other voluntary activities. In spite of financial cut-backs the strongest impression one gets in Sawtry is of steady growth. The growth in the community is reflected in the increasing range of activities, many of which thrive because of voluntary support and local initiative. The new buildings of the Comprehensive School benefit all users. An interesting feature is the joint library. The County Library Committee and the Education Authorities have approved a fully integrated school/county library. When school and county have pooled their resources of accommodation, books and staff, the new building will be of considerable benefit to the community.

The organisation of community education at the College is aided by an experimental self-budgeting scheme designed to allow more local freedom in the way in which money is allocated, and is a particularly useful one in times of economy. Last year Sawtry was one of five experimenting Colleges; this year they were joined by many more. The scheme covers a wide range of payments for evening

classes and use of the premises by clubs and societies. As long as payments are passed on to the County at a certain expected rate, then any surplus money earned from activities can be ploughed back into improvements or extra classes. The scheme carries risks, since a poor response means a financial loss which would have to be borne by the College, but it does bring its reward to all users if they support the organisation.

The Community Association represents all regular users of the Village College. It includes organisations based elsewhere in the catchment area who wish to make use of its services. Every registered group has representation on the Council of the Community Association. Full council meetings are held four times a year. The executive committee meets more frequently. There is also a Catering Committee and a Sawtry Show Committee. Through the Association, regular users have a chance to discuss their needs in relation to those of the others. The Association regulates rules for lettings, fees and admission of new members. It is closely involved in development schemes for the general improvement of community facilities.

In 1964/6 the community centred on Sawtry Village College and Sawtry County Primary School designed and constructed a recreation facility comparable with anything in the district. With help from the County Council and District Council two heated pools were built. Almost all the work was done by the local community as a team project. In subsequent years regular additions were made to the facilities, mostly through the income and initiative of the Sawtry Swimming Club. The pool is extremely heavily used throughout the year and

is of apparent benefit to the schools and the community. The College has virtually 100% swimmers and so have many of the contributory primary schools, who use the pools regularly. In summer the Swimming Club run seven sessions a week including Saturday and Sunday afternoon, rising to 12 sessions a week in the holidays. The Youth Clubs have a regular weekly session as do Evening Classes and Canoeists. All the national training films of the Royal Life Saving Society were made at the Sawtry pools. The administration has been handled in the same way as any other part of the college premises, through the Warden and the governing body with pool needs dovetailed into the total needs of the premises and the community.

Despite his lack of direct personal influence in the development of the Community School from the end of World War II until his death in 1961, Henry Morris was eventually to wield influence upon such development through other people. The Butler Education Act of 1944 gave recognition to the work of the Village College as a model for the proposed County College which could conveniently and economically be developed within an existing Secondary School. Counties such as Devon, Somerset and Leicestershire referred to the Village College as an example they wished to follow. Although this policy was never pressed by the Government, some local authorities went ahead with their plans to give young people and adults the chance to spend their leisure in Community Schools inside which the Secondary School was also housed. Others merely tacked on an adult wing or a Youth Centre to a Secondary School.

The 1970s provided a period of active growth governed somewhat by the financial stringency of the time. The Plowden Report (1967) gave some impetus to this and promoted the Community School in the

centre of the city. It encouraged teachers in twilight areas to try to get parents involved in the school. There is little doubt that the Community Schools, Community Colleges and Neighbourhood Centres which are springing up in different parts of the country bear a significant resemblance to Morris's Village Colleges. It is interesting to note that a number of young people who came into contact with Morris in the 1930s were responsible for many of the Community School developments in post-war years. Devonshire, where the principle of Community Schools is firmly established, can trace an early link between Elmslie Philip, Chief Education Officer, and Henry Morris: at University, in Cambridgeshire and as personal friends. In his proposals to Devon Education Committee in 1945 Mr. Philip states, "Not only from the economic point of view but for other cogent social and educational reasons, there is a great deal to be said for the planning of Secondary Schools, County Colleges and adult Community Centres as cultural units on the lines of the Village Colleges of Cambridgeshire. It is often said that adults (and young people too) do not like to 'go back to school'. This is an unreal attitude. The answer is that in years to come we shall find ourselves thinking more in terms of social, educational and recreational centres whether in towns or villages of which one part is devoted to the education of children during some of the day time." Today there are nine Community Colleges in Devon.

(ii) Leicestershire - Countesthorpe and Shepshed

Stewart Mason, Chief Education Officer of Leicestershire and previously an H.M.I. in East Anglia, freely acknowledges that the seeds of the Leicestershire scheme were produced in Cambridgeshire.

Immediate overt links with Cambridgeshire are noted by Cyril Poster. He writes of Countesthorpe, "The antecedents of Countesthorpe are clearly identifiable in the Cambridgeshire Village Colleges." The present Head of Countesthorpe is John Watts who started his career at Sawston. The Head of the first Community College in Leicestershire established at Ashby-de-le-Zouch was Stanley Western who came from Bottisham Village College.

Leicestershire then was a fore-runner in the post war development of Community Colleges. Plans were first outlined in the Leicestershire Scheme for 'Further Education and Plan for County Colleges' which the Authority was required to submit to the Ministry of Education in the terms of section 41-3 of the 1944 Education Act. Stewart Mason, Director of Education, subsequently developed the concept in a memorandum entitled 'Community Education' which he presented to the Leicestershire Education Committee in March 1949. The scene had been set by Henry Morris, for the document states:-

"S.67 The Colleges for further education at Coalville, Hinkley, Loughborough, Market Harborough, Melton Mowbray and Wigston will act as the Community Centres for their immediate neighbourhoods. This will not suffice to cover the whole county, and it is therefore planned to provide a number of Community Colleges* on the lines of the Cambridgeshire Village Colleges wherever the size of the population warrants. The core of the Community College will be the assembly hall, gymnasium, craft rooms and playing fields which the Authority must provide for Secondary Schools under the statutory duties and for which provision has been made in the Primary and Secondary Development Plan. The Community College will also house the County Library. To this core will be added, by means of separate wings, the amenities required for youth and adult activities. It is not intended that the Community Colleges should be merely Secondary Schools with further education adjuncts. The plan envisages the appointment of a Warden to superintend all the activities of the

* Original term 'County College' changed to 'Community College' 1953.

Community College, so that he will be able to weld it into one organic unit. Distances and public transport arrangements may make it possible for people from outlying villages to attend regularly at the Community College. It is therefore planned to staff the Community Colleges on a more generous scale so that Instructors can travel to the smaller villages to organise courses. Besides being the focal point of the neighbourhood, the Community College will in this way foster local community activities and so act as the leaven to the whole neighbourhood which it serves."¹

It is interesting to note in the wording of this document the mixture of the philosophy of Henry Morris as expressed in the expansive mood of the late 1920s and early 1930s with its religious ideals and philosophy pervading into the very design of the building, "the school as a silent teacher", compared with the post war realism of the 1940s "not merely a Secondary School with a further education adjunct" and the Warden to "weld it into one organic Community Unit". Yet the philosophy is the same with the ideals of "neighbourhood" in its deepest sense.

In Fairbairn's treatise, he observes that the Technical Colleges in his Authority had not provided the non-vocational community education as originally envisaged in the 'Scheme for Further Education'. Even more interesting is the comment that "it is almost impossible for Technical Colleges to have anything like so deep a concern for meeting the non-vocational educational needs of young people and adults as can a Community College based on a Secondary School."²

1 Leicestershire Scheme for Further Education and Plan for County Colleges, 1951.

2 Fairbairn, A.N. The Leicestershire Community Colleges. National Institute of Adult Education, October 1971.

Leicestershire has had a planned programme of Community College development and now has twenty-two Colleges, each developing its own characteristics and committed to meeting the needs of their respective communities. It is also worth noticing the financial commitment of Leicestershire to the development of Community Colleges and the fact that they have attempted to achieve their target of one new Community College a year.

Leicestershire was an early experiment of the principle of 'shared facilities' as outlined in the Ministry Circular 2/70, 'A Chance to Share'. They acknowledged that one of the ideas behind the Community College was the maximum use of the total facilities of the school both in school hours and out of them. They recognised that with the development of the Comprehensive School was a recognition of the communal needs of all young people. This led naturally to consideration of the links between the young and older people in communities. New building programmes have enabled Leicestershire to develop imaginative, if perhaps rather grandiose, schemes in recent years with elaborate community provision. Countesthorpe in particular has attracted a great deal of attention lately sparking off a lively debate, mention of which will be made later. There is a suggestion that the large complexes of Leicestershire may not be able fully to promote the philosophy of Henry Morris in Cambridgeshire although the seeds of the Leicestershire scheme were gleaned from the model of Cambridgeshire.

Countesthorpe, a more recent Leicestershire venture, is an unusual school.

"Whether it is a prototype of the school of the future remains to be seen, but certainly it fuses together several new trends in English education and in that sense it is perhaps unique."³

This comment by Brian Simon describes a school which was originally designed as a community college to serve as a focus of youth and adult educational and recreational activities as well as a school.

"The school operates, therefore, as part of an institution, having much wider and more various functions than is usual, these extend and enrich those of the school as a neighbourhood school and are in line with the developments in other parts of the country where the community function has been built into the comprehensive idea as a natural cohesive development. The building was designed to include facilities for youth and adult community activities on a single site."³

The design of the building was influenced by a concept based on the resources approach to learning, an approach which, at the time Countesthorpe was being planned, was under investigation by the Nuffield Resources for Learning team of which Tim McMullen, Michael Armstrong and John D'Arcy, who all took up appointments at Countesthorpe, were members. Countesthorpe was to represent the culmination of advanced educational thinking when it was designed. However, its advanced innovation was soon to create problems. The physical appearance of the school deteriorated; parental and political hostility increased, fanned by sensational publicity. Some of these problems can be attributed to the personality and poor health of the Head, Tim McMullen, who resigned in the fourth term. John Watts, who was appointed as successor to McMullen, declared that he stood squarely behind the previous Head's conception

3 Simon, B. Countesthorpe in the Context of Comprehensive Development, in, The Countesthorpe Experience, (ed.) John Watts. Urwin Educational Books, 1977.

of the school. The troubles, however, continued and a full inspection of the school commenced in October 1973. During these difficult times the community side of the school developed separately from the rest, the separate community staff and the clients being referred to as "part-time users". Reference is made in 'The Countesthorpe Experience' to "holiday activities for children: there is a creche for mothers while they use some of the facilities of the school, a community council is well established and there is a wide range of evening activities".⁴ It is noticeable that this reference to the community organisation of the school, together with a short contribution by Christine English, "I only Came for the Creche", is one of the few contributions in John Watts' book to describe the important "Community College" concept of Countesthorpe. The emphasis has been placed upon the school as a community with school staff and students involved in the running of the school, accepting responsibility and encouraging full participation. The school encourages a resources approach to learning with the promotion of individual responsibility for learning and behaviour. Geoffrey Taylor, a parent, writes:

"The concept of participation and commitment in decision-making by the whole school community, of a modern curriculum with a basic core and additional options with increasing pupil responsibility for their own destiny in a comprehensive, co-educational

⁴ Makins, V. Countesthorpe College - The First Five Years, in, The Countesthorpe Experience, (ed.) John Watts. Urwin Educational Books, 1977.

community school, seemed to me an ideal of education worthy of support in preparing all our young people for the world of today and tomorrow."⁵

This he feels is now beginning to be achieved in Countesthorpe.

In attempting to discover the extent of parental involvement and communication with staff in Countesthorpe, the comments of Dave Claidon are enlightening. He emphasises the need to communicate to parents the aims of the school and the fact that these are being fulfilled. He accepts the criticism that some of the meetings called to explain the working of the school have not been very successful and attendance has been small. He indicates that parents are invited to be involved in the decision-making of the College by voting at moots but acknowledges some reluctance on the part of parents to take up the invitation and feels that staff have not advanced the matter strongly. David Claidon expresses the view that,

"... both the activities of the P.T.A. and the decision to allow parents to vote at moots mark an intention to involve parents in the running of the school in some way, to do more than just inform parents of how the school is run. But I feel that on thinking of this aspect of our role is in its infancy. In practice, at the moment we do little more than listen seriously to individual parents and vote alongside parents at P.T.A. meetings when choosing committees or allocating money raised by the association."⁶

The writer considers the role of a teacher in a community school, pointing out that the existence of community activities affects the teacher's role.

⁵ Taylor, G. A Parent Reflects, in, The Countesthorpe Experience, op. cit., 1977.

⁶ Claidon, D. A Teacher's Work at Countesthorpe, in, The Countesthorpe Experience, op. cit., 1977.

"He no longer has sovereign sway over facilities; he can't, for instance, arrange to use equipment or the drama areas without first consulting the adult groups who also use them. Some teachers do provide evening sessions in the College, but again, although there is an interest in examining the present distinctions between education for adolescents and education for adults, and also in looking at the separation of roles implied in the notion that teachers do the educating and other adults do the bringing up, I think it would be true to say that as teachers we haven't got very far in crystallising these notions and putting them into practice. However, the fact that we do consider these matters collectively and individually implies a way of seeing ourselves that is manifest in other areas of our activities."⁷

The tension created by innovation which deviates from accepted practice as experienced with Countesthorpe is not uncommon. With the development of new Comprehensives in the United Kingdom, unrest has been experienced. In recent years this concern for apparent failings in academic standards and in conforming to acceptable social norms of behaviour have been experienced in Sweden and America, fore-runners of the Comprehensive system of education. Many of the options experienced in the Experimental School Program in America incorporate the Community College as now being developed in the United Kingdom with a large involvement of the community in both the educational programmes offered and the governance of the schools. Countesthorpe has been ambitious in that it has attempted to combine the many aspects of community involvement. In the first instance they have considered the school community and have developed new levels of participation through student involvement. They are trying to involve the wider community in the school by integrating adult education with the regular school programme and using community

7 Norris, R. Countesthorpe in an International Context, in, The Countesthorpe Experience, op. cit., 1977.

activities as part of the educational programme. This has also influenced the relationship between school leadership and the staff, the pastoral function of the school and the school building. What is being attempted at Countesthorpe fits into an overall trend in secondary education where the needs of the students, staff and parents interact and are closely linked with the needs of the wider community. In 'The Countesthorpe Experience', Robert Norris points out that innovation in education and more particularly the finer distinctions of the management function are very complex areas of study:

"Frightening as many of the facets of Countesthorpe's history are, it can only give courage to those who are convinced that schools need not wait for society to define their every form and rule. Some schools can look beyond today to tomorrow's needs and muster the human perseverance and openness required to grow in this business."⁸

More recently Andrew Fairbairn shows that he is aware of the changing needs of education and acknowledges that the concept of the community college continues to evolve. Shepshed Community College, opened in 1976, is different in both kind and degree from Leicestershire's first community college, opened at Ashby-de-la-Zouch in 1954. He says the college will have students aged 11-16 years compulsorily present, and particular attention will have to be paid to the pastoral system for these students. Other full time students will be extending their education in many ways, either as young people staying on beyond the statutory leaving age in the community-related 14-18 upper schools or as adults working for external examinations alongside young people. Fairbairn advocates that as

8 Norris, R. Countesthorpe in an International Context, in, The Countesthorpe Experience, op. cit., 1977.

many of these full time students as possible should work with part-time students, most of whom will be adults studying at appropriate times during the day and evening.

"It is not a question of dual or even triple use of the same premises; ideally all facilities are available to all students."⁹

The changing concept is recognised in the proposal that the school governing body be increased by six to represent community interest and that the community management committee will have substantial control over the finance of community education. The changing role of teaching staff and administrators is acknowledged, and Fairbairn urges in-service training to develop a new awareness of this concept of the community college. Staff may be appointed to serve in both sections of the college - school and community - on a percentage basis, e.g. 80% - 20%, the larger percentage representing the time a teacher spends with the school (or compulsory) element. Although teachers' unions view such development with caution there is a growing acceptance of the community role of the teacher.

The tenor of the present 'great debate' in education is reflected in the fact that staff at the college have an increasing awareness of the wider context of community and thus give closer consideration to what is taught and studied.

"Since parents and local people use college facilities, accountability can become a more shared responsibility; the school's work and performance is continually in the public eye."¹⁰

⁹ Secondary Education, June 1977, Vol. 7, No. 1.

¹⁰ Ibid.

Fairbairn suggests that the community college may attract staff of the widest experience with different perspectives who may be perceived differently by the pupils. The Community College may well have helped to make education more acceptable to the young, contributing to the above-average number of pupils staying on in the Leicestershire schools.

Of particular interest is Fairbairn's statement that a recent reappraisal of the community college had led to moves to adjust the administrative organisation more closely to the philosophy. At Shepshed College and at Groby College, opened in August 1975, integration of school and community took a step forward. Ten members of staff at each college were invited to give 10% of their time each week to the community side of the work, thus replacing some of the formerly separate full-time or part-time community education staff. The Education Committee agreed that the staff accepting these across-the-board appointments, should receive £126 per annum. The student-staff ratio continues to operate and the equivalent of one extra teacher will be available to the school. The Leicestershire experiment is a new departure in English Education; for the first time it involves secondary school teachers in community education as part of their jobs and not just an extra for which they are paid part-time rates.

Fairbairn indicates that the results of this experiment could be significant. With the continued development of the community school it recognises the interest of teachers in community education. It helps to overcome the difficulties that some community tutors experience in career prospects. (Although this is questionable in

the North East of England where it is difficult to attract suitable applicants for posts). It gives teachers the opportunity to teach and work with adults, and gain experience of administrative and organising responsibility in a different aspect of work. He suggests, quite rightly the writer believes, that it will help to make teaching more sensitive to the needs of adolescents.

The timetable and the working year becomes more flexible to the extent that all full-time staff will be able to work at weekends or in the evenings with the appropriate time off in lieu.

Leicestershire's Director of Education acknowledges that the community college is not the panacea for the problems which face schools. However, he firmly states his belief in the philosophy of the community school.

"The community concept, however, goes to the heart of education; it shows that the learning process is a continuum, not a commodity for young people between certain ages. It promotes maximum deployment of plant and resources. Above all, it makes optimum use of human resources; teachers are extended, pupils gain from the wider facilities and adults have the opportunity to continue their development in a sympathetic environment. Whether an individual community college is a success depends upon the energy and vision of all concerned but when a college thrives, it becomes the focus of educational interest in the community. At a time when many schools are subject to criticism and suspicion, often as a result of ignorance of what goes on within them, the community college can make a practical and positive contribution to the debate about education."¹¹

¹¹ Secondary Education, June 1977, Vol. 7, No. 1.

(iii) I.L.E.A. (Inner London Education Authority)

Whilst studying the development of community schools throughout the country it becomes apparent that the organisation of these schools and their interpretation of the principle of sharing differs somewhat. The Inner London Education Authority in its development of community schools based its plans on the existing structure of the schools. A report produced in 1973, 'An Education Service for the Whole Community', discusses the education service of Inner London and its requirement to serve more fully the needs of the whole community. The report is concerned with the structure of the service, unlike Leicestershire and Cambridgeshire who took into account the philosophy of community schooling when they built. With this in mind I.L.E.A. are looking to the present organisations within the community and examining them to see if they are meeting the needs of the people they are designed to serve. The report concerned itself with looking at every educational building with a view to its position as an educational resource for the majority of the people of Inner London and not just reserved to serve a few.

The report comments,

"We are sometimes dismayed by the way in which children are tugged apart by the divergent influences upon them: a home which has no contact with school, teachers who do not appreciate the degree of deprivation to which the child has been subjected, the leisure group, the gang with an ethos quite different from that of either home or school. No one will deny the profound influence of home on progress in school nor the importance of leisure time opportunities for youngsters. How often, however, is a youngster met with attitudes in one or other sector of his life which practise disregard for the other two? My school, your play centre; my social centre, your truancy rate, these are attitudes which fail to see the individual as a whole person."¹

1 An Education Service for the Whole Community, I.L.E.A., 1973.

Although the philosophy of I.L.E.A. thus is basically similar to that of Cambridgeshire and Leicestershire, the viewpoint differs somewhat. They recommend an investigation of existing organisations with a view to community innovation within these separate institutions. Their approach was interesting in that they made significant specific enquiries of the educational service, for example, 'Which members of the community do we miss out?' The report was forthright in that it acknowledged the fact that many parents had little contact with school except in a crisis situation. Investigation would show this to be true of many schools in the country. The report also observed the situation whereby teachers have contact with parents but are resistant to any real parent participation in school affairs or fail to achieve any real parental involvement in the child's education. The report questions the effectiveness of the present educational service to the community by enquiring into the quality of parenthood, and probing into the cycle of deprivation that is too apparent in many families today. Rather than attempting to centralise community provision as has been the case in many authorities, the report indicates that the proposed policy of the Inner London Education Authority was to create closer natural links between the existing institutions, in particular between schools and further education, making special reference to the place of the Youth Service within the organisation. The concept of shared use of accommodation and facilities is commended by I.L.E.A. They acknowledge that many of their problems of separateness are due to the restriction of accommodation. They also look to new or remodelled buildings to improve the facilities available and recommend in some cases, adult, youth and play areas to be developed

within the school, thus making it a more effective base for community education.

As part of its investigation I.L.E.A. set up a number of conferences throughout the Authority and it was significant that although they were enthusiastic about the benefits to be derived from sharing resources with the community, they acknowledged the major difficulty as being one of attitude. A considerable lessening of insularity would be required by the many groups concerned if true sharing was to be achieved. There would be a need for all concerned to think of education as an on-going process and for teachers to have a wider concept of their role. The Inner London Education Authority has to some extent, directed members of its educational service to think to the future in terms of direct and positive links with the community. They recommended the implementation of the Plowden Report definition of the community school: "a school which is open beyond the ordinary school hours for use of children and their parents and exceptionally for other members of the community". It was acknowledged that at present many secondary schools were well used in the evening but often these activities are unconnected with the school itself and therefore the secondary school is insufficiently associated with the community it serves. During holiday periods the resources are little used. A hope was expressed that efforts would be made to link more closely together the secondary schools and the adult community, especially parents and families connected with the school. A significant comment expressed in the report was the suggestion that there was a need to take a fresh look at the employment hours of teachers to make them more flexible. Finally

the lines of possible development for the secondary schools were outlined as:

- (a) "Meeting the need for an increasing range of opportunities for the pupils in that school at the end of the normal school day.
- (b) Links with and similar provision for young people traditionally catered for in the Youth Service.
- (c) Increasing parental involvement in the life and work of the school.
- (d) Provision for activities for parents of pupils of the school, possibly on a family basis.
- (e) The development of improved links and arrangements with the Youth Service and Adult Education Service in connection with the above.
- (f) The extension of adult activities provided for others in the neighbourhood." ²

(iv) Wales and Sheffield

By 1970 a fairly clear pattern of community school organisation had become apparent. It would have been very facile to report that this was due to the foresight of Henry Morris and Stewart Mason whose influence upon this changing concept of the school was significant, but although some authorities planned schools with the widest interpretation of community involvement in mind, influenced by the Reports of Plowden, Gittens and Russell which emphasised the importance of home-school relations, many were more concerned with the economical use of expensive school buildings. This was the policy of Monmouthshire who as early as 1958 provided a leisure centre on the site of a new secondary school. The developing comprehensive school incorporated a building containing a sports hall, a swimming

pool, squash courts, youth club rooms, a lounge bar and a cafeteria together with rooms for general use. Gwent now have fourteen such secondary-school-based centres. The advantage to school and community in having this generous provision is obvious but the problems of such sharing can create difficulties. Gwent look to the appointment of a Headmaster-Warden to solve these problems. However more recently these appointments have been separated to those of Head and Manager. This suggests a return to separate dual provision rather than corporate 'shared use'.

In Sheffield some difficulty was experienced in defining the term 'community school'. W.G.R. Carter, Assistant Education Officer for Sheffield, posed the question, "Does the title not have to be earned?" He believed that community building or community access to school was not sufficient but that the nature of the school organisation and its involvement with the community it served was the key factor. In Sheffield, as in other areas, accessibility to some first and middle schools and their provision for the neighbourhood as an education and resource centre earns them the title of 'Community School'. A recent development in Sheffield was the idea that different parts of the education service should come together to produce the notion of a 'Campus', a school, a youth club and adult education centre in one place. It was admitted that, with the proposal to set up 15 to 20 community campuses linking adult education and comprehensive schools, some with sports centres and youth clubs, the sensible use of resource was as much in mind as a new community philosophy. The fact that school as a statutory compulsory service with closely defined objectives may be viewed as

a threat to adult education and the youth service was acknowledged. Would they be swallowed up and lose their identity? The school on the other hand may view adult education and the youth service as less disciplined and of more use if this was so. Federation, rather than integration was the aim of the Sheffield Education Authority, close co-operation, consultation and maximum freedom with the head of the campus having overall accountability. It would appear that Sheffield viewed the development of the campus as a cautious step towards the development of 'community schools'.

(v) The Abraham Moss Centre, Manchester

One of the most ambitious schemes recently developed is that of the Abraham Moss Centre in Manchester. The centre includes an eight-form-entry Comprehensive School, a College of Further Education, an adult education centre, a shared use district sports centre and district library, a creche adjoining the children's library, a performing arts centre including theatre, drama studio and music suite, a youth wing that will double as a students' union facility during the day, an aged and handicapped people's club and a small residential wing which will house thirteen staff and students. An interesting feature of the project was the co-operation between the D.E.S. Architects and Building Branch and the Manchester City Architects' Department. It is an excellent example of joint planning and shared resource with many Officers and Committees other than education being involved. Dr. Laybourne had been greatly impressed by the community provision on school sites in Sweden, particularly in providing the opportunity for adults and adolescents to meet

together. This reflection of the Swedish 'Grundskole' is shown in the provision of the concert hall, exhibition space and shopping area within the complex. The sixteen-plus stage of education is given special consideration by the co-ordinating of education for students in employment on block or day release with that for those still in full-time extended education. This is aimed at creating a more mature setting for the education of older pupils, relating it to the adult world as referred to in the Newsom Report.

Dr. Laybourne's consciousness of the wider community beyond that of teachers and pupils, and its possible influence upon education is clearly seen.

"All schools are in some sense community schools but the comprehensive school incorporated in the Abraham Moss Centre has more ambitious aims than Plowden had in mind in defining a community school as 'a school which is open beyond the ordinary school hours for the use of children, their parents, and, exceptionally, for other members of the community'. This quotation does not do justice to the Plowden view but it serves my purpose because it exemplifies the weak definition of a community school as a multi-purpose physical resource."¹

Jackson Hall, successor to Dr. Kenneth Laybourne as Deputy Education Officer for Manchester, underlines the belief of Dr. Laybourne that schools have a greater potential than is commonly achieved. In his description of the ideas behind the planning of resources at the Abraham Moss Centre, Jackson Hall sees a danger in regarding community schools solely as a special prescription for Education Priority Areas. He writes that the concept is educationally valid for all, regardless of the socio-economic composition of the community. In a recent interview with the writer he strongly

1 Hall, J. Forging Links Within a Social System. Education 202, February 1975.

confirmed his views, as expressed in the article, that parental attitudes to education were of the greatest importance. He expected the centre to look beyond the immediate community of teachers and pupils to the wider community which includes parents. The organisation of the school is regarded as vital if the aim to achieve an efficient social context for the pupils and their learning is to be realised. An important element in this immediate community of the centre is the emphasis placed by the Principal, Mr. R. Mitson, upon resource-based learning. Jackson Hall believes the resource material has an important dual role both as a medium of learning for pupils and in in-service training for teachers. In the design and organisation of the Centre, the Manchester Authority hopes that more positive response from parents will evolve and great efforts will be made to forge links with adults, especially parents.

"Gathering all this together the basic aim of the community school is more effective relationship between teachers, pupils and parents in the belief that this is more enjoyable and also more efficient."²

In the recent interview (1978), Jackson Hall was more cautious in his comments concerning possible expectations in the achievement of the community school, especially in the area of motivation although he still believed that any improvement was a bonus. He was concerned about the occasional gap between the community school and neighbourhood objectives and questioned whether the school can or should be a realistic instrument in their expression.

Despite the size of Abraham Moss Centre the needs and interests of the many relatively small social groups, the individual, and

2 Hall, J. Forging Links Within a Social System. Education 202, February 1975.

particularly younger pupils, have been safeguarded. Lower school, for instance, is designed as an almost self-contained school with areas and resources for about ninety per cent of the activities of the 480 11 to 13 year olds. It has its own entrance from the public right-of-way through the Centre, and its own Head Teacher, working largely but not entirely autonomously. It is this easily identifiable home base, within which pastoral care is firmly established, that the pupils first join, and from its comparative security they can begin to adapt gradually to life in the whole of the Centre, and find a meaningful place for themselves in relation to that whole.

Middle School also has its separate entrance and also provides the 13 to 15 year olds with the larger part of their programme. Again this section of the school is substantially a self-contained unit giving the pupils a sense of identity and a feeling of security.

A special programme of transition from Middle School to Upper School/College of Further Education provides a close association between vocational and academic students. Individual members of the community are welcome to attend courses during the day as well as in the evening. An interesting feature is the possibility of the day release of pupils from school to college. The provision of adult non-vocational classes within the centre, which may include younger students also and the community's increased use of quiet study areas for Open University courses all help to smooth the transition between formal education and membership of the adult community.

The district library has a central place in the complex and is used by the students alongside members of the public. Such an arrangement promotes a centralisation and sharing of resources.

Whatever is available to the community becomes available to the students, and whatever would normally have been available to the school and college and probably unused during the evenings, weekends and holidays, is made available to the community also. Everyone gains by this, possibly the school and college most of all.

It is envisaged that the library would become a resource centre and this centralisation should be of great value to the professional staff working in the Centre. They will have available to them equipment that might normally have stayed locked and unused in some other department's cupboards and may thereby supply more effective and enriched learning opportunities for their students. Widening the use of audio-visual aids at the Centre should benefit not only those whose level of literacy is low but also those who, whatever their ability, learn more effectively through one medium than another. Such accessibility of a wider variety of media and resources should eventually increase the possibility of enabling each individual to learn whatever he wants to learn through the medium that offers him optimum efficiency in learning.

The equipment and resources which will be stored centrally will be available to members of the public. The pupils of the school, who will eventually become members of the adult community, will come to regard the library as an information centre where what they need to know is accessible through a variety of media.

As indicated earlier, a major shared-use facility in the Centre is the sports centre where school, college and public

facilities have been combined to provide quite lavish resources, far more than any school or college could hope to have during the day, and more than any local community would normally have for sports provision. All are available for the benefit of the people of the community during evenings, weekends and holidays.

A theatre provides seating for over 300 and is fully used by school, college and other groups within the community including a theatre workshop group.

Aged and handicapped are brought into close contact with all that the Centre has to offer. Their social and dining club is part of the Centre. From there they make use of the facilities, joining activity groups or classes, side by side with young people and adults.

The Centre's community orientation is emphasised by the openness of the site itself. A public right of way bridged by the building in three places, runs from north to south through the Centre, with the school youth wing, and much of the college on one side, and the adult education centre, library and sports centre on the other. It branches out to the west also, between the sports centre and the library, theatre and aged and handicapped people's club. There are three shops on this right of way.

In Abraham Moss, thoughtful planning and community/educational dual-use provision on a large scale have made a wealth of resources available in an area where they are needed. The Abraham Moss Community Users' Association, composed of parents, teachers, associated colleagues, students, representatives of affiliated bodies and interested members of the local community are developing

generative and supportive influences to enable members of the local community to establish, and become self-supporting in, different activities.

The Principal of the Centre, Mr. R. Mitson, in a description of the scheme (1974) indicates the wealth of resources available, but acknowledges that they can only be effective if community involvement is nurtured. He looks to the Community Users' Association to develop generative and supportive influences to enable members of the local community to become more self-supporting.

Mitson emphasises the importance of relationships and feels that they should be reflected in the educational environment in the Centre. In this, what happens between the teachers and the pupils is fundamental: it is important that the pupil shares in the planning of his development. He writes,

"For many pupils a gradual weaning may be necessary from this dependence upon the teacher towards coping with a learning environment in which they are not entirely dependent upon the teacher for their learning. Instead individual pupils may be provided with structured materials at their level of understanding, which they are able to approach and work at on their own although the teacher is still available to work with them, providing encouragement and stimulation, helping where problems arise, and keeping a close watch on their progress. This would not be to the exclusion of a whole range of other experiences, from being part of a large or small group listening and watching, taking part in some activity, working or discussing together, or being guided or tutored by a teacher."³

To achieve this the Lower School is designed as four integrated subject areas where the lack of rigid demarcation and sharing of equipment and resources provides the need to collaborate and have a

3 Mitson, R. Paper: The Abraham Moss Centre, Manchester. 1974.

sense of common interest and purpose which is an essential feature of community.

Mitson indicates that his concept of the community school is greater than that of sharing physical resources with community. He believes it begins at the very heart of the educational processes within the school. He states,

"Community is marred by segregation, and a community school would be an unsuitable place for streaming, yet our profession is only just beginning to discover that coping with de-streaming requires a fundamentally different approach to relationships and the working environment."⁴

He believes that the more pupils learn to develop skills of learning and ability to use resources, the greater their sense of responsibility will become and the more confident they will become within the Centre and later in the wider community. He is concerned to "exploit the excellent potential the Centre offers to blur the distinction between school and community, education and life, young and old, by involving parents and the community in the Centre and the students in the community."⁵

(vi) Wyndham School, Cumberland

Gordon Bessey, Chief Education Officer for Cumberland, whilst working previously in Surrey, had been greatly influenced by the disastrous friction which dual use could create between the school and the further education system under two heads. He was attracted by the idea of the Cambridgeshire system under the control of one head.

4 Mitson, R. op. cit., 1974.

5 Ibid.

He acknowledges the influence of Henry Morris and indicates that Cumberland in conjunction with other education authorities is interpreting and developing his vision in their community schools. Perhaps the best known of Cumberland's Community Schools is Wyndham School at Egremont. Wyndham is referred to in many texts as a 'Community School', yet John Sharp, the founding headmaster, finds himself in somewhat of a dilemma in defining that label. His book 'Open School' describes the organisation of Wyndham and emphasises Sharp's interpretation of the school as a community in its own right with its own organisation and multitude of interactions taking place between parents, pupils and teachers. His references to the community school as envisaged by Morris are interspersed in the text almost casually. Within his description of the school as a community he makes reference to wider community. More and more we begin to see schools as a part and not an isolated part of the adult world. Home and school must work together: "We no longer seek an isolated community but wish to mingle freely with life in the neighbourhood." These references relate generally to the concept of 'shared use' but it is not until the Appendix that John Sharp is more specific. An early reference from his childhood indicates that Sharp was aware of the under use of expensive plant. In his effort to define his interpretation of a community school he acknowledges that sharing the buildings with the community is only part of the description. He emphasises the importance of attitudes in defining the concept,

"The Community School, then, is a house not made with hands. Its foundations are the abandonment of exclusiveness in the day; an acceptance by the public that this is our school, not simply the one we are taxed for and the liberalisation of the one-time night

school into a community and arts centre. Like the day school, the evening centre has become comprehensive."¹

John Sharp makes a number of observations which are the subject of debate when discussing community school. He returns to his opening remarks in his book in which he attempted to identify the principle of a community school. He indicates the interactions between youth and adults, father and son, mother and daughter you would expect to find in a community school. He acknowledges that this will have an effect between teacher and pupil but questions its effect upon the factual content of what we teach. John Sharp suggests that many schools, perhaps not classified as community are very outward looking in their curriculum. It is interesting to note his observations regarding the organisation of further education, youth, swimming baths, library under one management, he acknowledges the advantages and the absence of friction between day and evening users but points out the difficulties which may be experienced by the Principal. He suggests that the Principal will be inclined to see the school as his main task and the other responsibilities as extras "to which he will give more time than he can truly spare but less than they deserve."² This observation is worth enquiring into when describing the schemes in the research particularly as they are managed with the help of a Second Deputy Head or Youth and Community Tutor of which system John Sharp maintains,

"A deputy not much involved in the main work of the day time will not count for much in the Common Room. If he is deeply involved, the work of the evening

1 Sharp, J. Open School. J.M. Dent & Sons, 1973.

2 Ibid.

must suffer for it (unless he has no private life).
We have scarcely yet found the solution."³

(vii) Nottinghamshire and the Sutton Centre

Ministry Circular 2/70, "The Chance to Share" added further stimulus to the idea of designing and organising new secondary schools as community schools. This Circular, following the Circular 11/64, "Provision of Facilities for Sport", was probably a pointer to the Nottinghamshire Education Committee, already committed to a school and sports centre joint-use pattern, to consider whether community involvement should go a step further. Sutton-in-Ashfield was the location for this step forward. A survey discovered that not only did the town need a new comprehensive school, but it also needed facilities for youth work, day time as well as evening adult education, provision for a shift-working community, a centre for aged and physically handicapped, a health centre and a local community theatre. From this need was planned the Sutton Centre. James A. Stone, Director of Education for Nottingham, describes the philosophy behind the planning of a community school as,

"The acceptance of the idea that education is the process of learning to live rather than merely to pass examinations, that this is not an activity reserved for school hours, but one that goes on at all times and in all places where pupils widen their experience - in the home, in the street, in the community in which they grow up, one that goes on wherever young people come together with others young and old; that what pupils learn in school is part of and not apart from, what they learn outside. If this be accepted it follows that learning to live cannot be carried out in segmented packages, that school, home and community at large are engaged

3 Sharp, J. op. cit., 1973.

in what should be a co-operative venture, a venture that can never be expected to achieve full success if those engaged in it go their separate ways, unconcerned with the efforts of others possibly pulling in other directions."¹

In summary the community school as it was seen at Sutton meant bringing the school out of its traditional isolation and into a close relationship with the community it serves a two-way relationship in which school looks out and goes out into the community and community penetrates into its school. The needs of that community had been identified to a considerable extent by the people of Sutton themselves and this may be seen in the design of the buildings. It is significant that the community school idea in Nottinghamshire owes as much to the county architect, Henry Swain, as to the education department. The design of the Sutton Centre reflects an organic unity, it is difficult to identify the separate parts of the building as 'school' or as 'community buildings', James Stone used the language of Morris when describing the Sutton Centre,

"Education is not only for children and in the High Pavement Scheme it would be possible for adults and children to study together, to share the coffee bars, the dining rooms, the study areas and the workshops. We are planning a new world and this scheme will be suitable for this new world. The school will be as it ought to be, a central and essential part of community living in town."²

Henry Swain, architect to Nottingham County Council, believed that new opportunities for achieving wider goals were developing for the comprehensive schools. In acknowledging government appeal

1 The Community Concept, (ed.) Tudor, D. Councils and Education Press Ltd., 1975.

2 Ibid.

for a more effective use of school plant, he indicated the choice this gave to the architect to design buildings for community use whilst at the same time providing the chance to achieve these new goals. In his address to R.I.B.A. Conference in 1968 he puts a case for a school with something more than a few additions:

"What surely emerges is something which is no longer a school as a specialised building. Education should be seen as a process that involves people at various stages in their lives and does not distinguish between recreational, vocational and academic studies. But even this in my view does not go far enough and perhaps ... what is needed is a central community service in which education itself is only part."³

In Swain we have an architect who closely relates the design of schools to present educational trends: the expansion of adult education, the need for the wider use of leisure facilities and the outgoing realistic nature of secondary education. His belief in the need for the school to be identified with the community greatly influenced the siting of the community school in Sutton-in-Ashfield. A site in the centre of Sutton had been cleared for a major town centre development. At the same time plans had been proposed for a new Comprehensive School. This provided the challenge for the development of a school incorporating more than the joint use of school and sports centre. With the suggestion that the new school development should be re-sited in the central area a feasibility study was initiated. The study recommended that the new complex should be situated in the geographical centre of the locality, next to the new shopping precinct and should incorporate:-

3 Swain, H. Community Schools: An Address to the R.I.B.A. Conference. Building for Education, Looking Forward, 1968.

- (i) A Comprehensive School for over 1,300 students.
- (ii) A Youth Centre with an unusual 'bunker' discotheque.
- (iii) An Adult Education Centre.
- (iv) A Teachers' Centre.
- (v) A Day Centre for the elderly and physically handicapped.
- (vi) A dual-purpose Sports Hall with facilities for most indoor sports and for choral and orchestral productions, plus two squash courts.
- (vii) A theatre seating 250 people.
- (viii) A large indoor Bowls Hall and an Ice Skating Rink.
- (ix) Provision for Careers Advisory, Probation and Education Welfare Services.
- (x) A Creche and young children's games area.
- (xi) A communal dining and bar facilities.

Additionally, provision off site was to be made for the range of outdoor sports, including soccer, hockey, rugby, tennis and so on, together with a floodlit all-weather pitch and target golf range.

The Feasibility Study underlined the need to bring schools "out of their traditional seclusion and into the market place."⁴ In design at least this has almost literally been achieved. In the planning of the Sutton Centre there is evidence by those concerned of some attempt to define the term 'Community School'. There was an acceptance of the idea that education was concerned with much more than examination success. It was concerned with integrating school and community by breaking down some of the barriers which now exist, each helping and reinforcing the other. It was concerned

4 Feasibility Study - Education and Architects Departments of Nottinghamshire County Council, January 1971.

with bringing together home, school and community in a co-operative venture of learning to live. To achieve this it was important in the first place that the design of the building be organic, making it difficult to distinguish between community and school provision. Many of the facilities are programmed for joint use in an integrated form rather than parallel use at different times. Adults can be found working alongside pupils in language laboratories, craft workshops and remedial groups with the restaurant used by pupils and adults alike.

Although the Sutton Centre is still in its infancy a report was produced in September 1976 of a study group formed from members of a W.E.A. and University of Nottingham Extra-Mural Course. The study group investigated the response of parents to the Sutton Centre concept. In discussing the findings of this report it must be noted that the centre had been operating for three years only, was not fully built and had not produced pupils who had attended throughout their secondary education. The reason for this early report was an awareness of some discontent and criticism of the Sutton Centre within the community. Members wished to discover if this dissatisfaction within the locality was justified and if so, discover why the Sutton Centre had not achieved a goal of the community school that of extending the role of the school and blending school with community.

Although the authors of the report indicate their recognition of the limitations of the study some of the findings provide some interesting, if tentative, generalisations. The report suggested that relationships between the Sutton Centre and the community were,

on the whole, perceived favourably by the majority of parents. Questionable is the veiled suggestion that within the community of Sutton-in-Ashfield there exists a social and cultural deficiency which needs compensatory action. This is linked with the Council's 'new life' concept of the centre and sets the school a mammoth task. The report acknowledges that this conception of the nature of this community is an over simplification. This raises the question whether any attempt by a community school to alter a total, well-established way of life is wise.

Tim Albert's description of the Sutton Centre indicates that, atmosphere and architecture apart, the school has many significant educational innovations.

"Out have gone such traditional mainstays as uniforms, bells, staffrooms, playgrounds, 40 minute lessons and 'O' level examinations. We have some longer periods, new subject divisions, C.S.E. Mode 3 examinations, the opening of the school to the community and voluntary evening classes."⁵

The school had developed to over 900 pupils divided into mixed ability groups of about 24. They stay in these groups throughout the day, first at a half-hour session with their tutor, then in one two-and-a-half hour block in the morning and another in the afternoon. Parallel to these ten main daytime sessions each week, the curriculum, and most of the staff, have been organised into ten groups. These are English (drama and literature), mathematics, sciences, environmental studies, European studies (including languages), creative arts (music and art), sports and leisure, personal relationships (including health education, careers guidance, etc.), technical studies and home management.

Two "withdrawal" departments in operation are: communications and resources, operating on a block release system, taking whole groups out of their normal curriculum for a week or term, and remedial work operating on an informal basis, withdrawing individual pupils as needed.

Interesting and exciting is the eleventh session concept. Each weekday evening there are two hour-long sessions, voluntary for the pupils and also for members of the community but compulsory for the teachers, on a wide range of subjects. Adults pay as they learn, pupils attend free and these sessions are well attended by pupils.

The classrooms are grouped around small coffee bars, where teachers and pupils take their break when they feel the time is right. "Everybody wants to switch off from time to time," says the Head Teacher, Stewart Wilson, "but what's to stop them doing it together?"

Pupils keep profiles of their own work, written up during the half-hour tutorial period and these form an important part of their Mode 3 examinations. Each profile outlines the objectives of each course and has space for pupils' comments on teachers, and parents' comments on pupils and teachers as well as the more usual comment by teachers on pupils.

Stewart Wilson accepts staff on four conditions:-

- (i) They must want to come to community school;
- (ii) They must work a flexible day-week year;
- (iii) They must be prepared to teach adults, and
- (iv) They must be prepared to act in a pastoral capacity, including visiting the homes of parents.

Tim Albert writes that the staff find working at the Sutton Centre more demanding, with pressure and a fast pace, but very rewarding.

He also indicates that parents seem pleased, many appear to see the benefit for their child in that the work seems more relevant. Stewart Wilson states in the article,

"Mixed ability works, that's an important starting point. We have a balanced mixed curriculum all the way through the school and children don't have to make individual choices. We have proved without any shadow of doubt that children do want to come back and work at times other than during the school day. And we have shown that adults and children can work alongside each other ... This is the way things are going to develop, I'm convinced of that."⁶

(viii) Summary

If we return to the criteria for community schools as set out by George and Teresa Smith in the Inspectorate Bulletin, Community Schools, as described at the beginning of this chapter, we will discover that the schemes outlined contain a number of common points, yet often vary considerably in emphasis.

We may begin by accepting the Midwinter description,

"A community school is a neighbourhood comprehensive school. It offers its services to its host community, in part because that community is already beavering away educating the children willy-nilly."¹

In its simplest terms a community school may be labelled such simply because of what it is, its existence in the neighbourhood will be assumed to promote community development and that a community with

6 Times Educational Supplement, op. cit.

1 Midwinter, E. Education and the Community. George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1975.

extra facilities is by that fact a better community. However, it is suggested that it is what a school does that makes it a community school. All of the schools studied serve a geographical area. Differences arise from the nature of that area and the activity of the school within the neighbourhood. The Cambridgeshire Village Colleges serve large rural areas and many of the participants need to travel to the centres. In Leicestershire, Colleges of Further Education were used to service their immediate neighbourhood. Concern about the nature of their provision led to the development of purpose built neighbourhood Community Colleges. The Inner London Education Authority, in co-ordinating their community agencies, experienced difficulties in identification through the scattered location of the facilities. Schools in Sheffield served a geographical neighbourhood but it was the development of the school campus as a resource centre for a neighbourhood which earned them the title of "community school".

The Abraham Moss Centre and Sutton Centre were built at the hub of developing geographical areas. The concept was that of the school acting as an important part of a larger community development.

The second definition of a community school described in the Smith document is perhaps the one which identifies at its most basic level the description of a community school. "A school which shares its premises with the community" - a criterion which all community schools must have. It is the manner in which this provision is shared with the age groups of the area that differs. The Cambridgeshire College provided facility for child clinic, careers guidance and medical facilities for the aged. Leicestershire and

ILEA, on the other hand, were more concerned with educational and youth provision; wide provision was made by inviting different age groups into the building for activities organised by the schools and colleges. The Inner London Education Authority discovered that although the facilities of the secondary schools were well used in the evenings, most of these were unconnected with the school itself, indicating too little association with the community they serve. The main concern was the development of the Youth Service and Adult Education in the schools. Sheffield has pursued a policy of bringing together the different parts of the educational service into a campus; a school, a youth club and an adult education centre into one place. Wyndham School, Abraham Moss and the Sutton Centre aimed at making resources available to the widest age range with a view to eventually helping members of the local community to establish and support different activities as needs arose. The Director of Education for Nottinghamshire suggested that the community school should provide education for young and old, alongside each other where desirable, also providing services required by the differing needs of the whole age range.

It is in the broad approach to education, where the school acknowledges the need for new forms of curriculum, the development of different skills of relevance to the local and familiar environment, that community schools differ considerably. Henry Morris perceived the need to develop practical subjects and vocational experience at school for the average child. He believed that education would re-invigorate the whole community, however, there is little evidence of any direct influence upon the curriculum in

the Cambridgeshire Colleges. Fairbairn wrote of the Leicestershire Colleges that the Technical Colleges in his area had not provided the non-vocational community education as originally envisaged. He maintained that it was impossible for them to have anything like so deep a concern for meeting those needs as a secondary based "Community College" can. Countesthorpe, although attracting great criticism and adverse publicity, pursued new forms of curriculum, developing new roles and greatly changing its institution to allow education to extend its influence into new areas. The design of the building was influenced by a concept based on the resources approach to learning.

The Inner London Education Authority saw the service provided by the community school as being mainly that of education. Sheffield considered the sensible use of resources as important as any new community philosophy.

The Principal of the Abraham Moss Centre declared himself to be a firm believer in the development of resource-based learning. He maintained that providing accessibility to a wide variety of media and resources increases the opportunity for each individual to learn what he wants to learn in a way that offers the best system to suit his needs. Innovation and a broad approach to education and the curriculum is promoted in the school. R. Mitson indicates that his view of the community school is more than that of sharing physical resources with the community. He believes it begins at the very heart of the educational processes within the school.

John Sharp, in his description of Wyndham School, states that sharing the building with the community is only part of the

description of a community school. He is greatly concerned about the importance of attitudes and relationships and suggests that open contact with the community, in particular parents, will influence teacher-pupil relationships, but he doubts its effect upon the factual content of the curriculum.

The Sutton Centre and other Nottinghamshire Community Schools are based upon the belief of James A. Stone, Director of Education, that education is a process of learning to live and that this should be a co-operative venture with all sections of the community. This philosophy has had considerable effect upon the curriculum and teaching methods experienced in the schools, in particular those of the Sutton Centre.

It is unclear to what extent there has been integration of the school with other agencies, statutory and voluntary, in serving the community. The co-ordinating of various parts of the educational service has been seen as a corner-stone of community school development in many of the areas studied. Cambridgeshire provided for youth, employment and health for the young and aged in one building. Leicestershire schemes showed little evidence of direct involvement with outside agencies. The philosophy of the colleges appeared to be based upon the idea of the school as a community providing for the needs of the neighbourhood. The Inner London Education Authority approached the concept of the community school by investigating the agencies already existing and promoting a policy of innovation within them, creating close natural links with these agencies, in particular schools and establishments of further education with special reference to the youth service. Sheffield

shared a traditional approach to the integration of recognised parts of the education service with a cautious approach to the concept of the community school.

The Abraham Moss Centre has organised fine facilities to be provided from within the organisation, not necessarily co-ordinating and combining existing agencies.

H. Swain, the architect for Nottinghamshire County Council, in designing the Sutton Centre, was interested in providing an extensive shared resource which would include the school and house a wide variety of services from probation, careers and welfare to sporting and leisure facilities.

It will be seen that different types of organisations which have called themselves community schools have existed for some time. Immediately post-war the concept was interpreted in a less liberal way than that pioneered by Henry Morris. It was recognised that the large schools appearing on building programmes could contribute positively towards the provision of leisure opportunities. School facilities were modified by the addition of financial resources other than those for school building to allow the provision of recreational and social facilities not normally found in a school brief. The development of community orientated schools enabled individuals to fulfil their leisure aspirations not only through organised classes but through sessions laid aside for individual, family or club membership.

The key to this development was management geared to creating throughout the year, valid community opportunity where age or club membership was not the pre-requisite of use. There was nothing new

in the mid sixties about the use of schools for adult education and youth purposes. From the mid sixties however, increasing emphasis began to be directed towards design and management with money made available from outside the Education budget. Earlier examples of local control and accountability were seen in the self-budgeting policy of the post-war Cambridgeshire College. In the development of the Leicestershire Colleges evidence was seen of local control in that the representation of the school governors was increased by six to allow for representatives of the community interest, with the management committee having substantial control over finance.

The Inner London Education Authority showed little evidence that the philosophy of the community school required a change in management although they indicated their desire that opportunities should be given for increased parental involvement. They simply requested the present system of management to look closely at the implication of direct and positive links with the community. Sheffield indicated their fear that the Youth Service and Adult Education may lose identity, they suggested federation rather than integration under a Head of Campus. The government of the scheme to be similar to the present situation with a need for co-operation and consultation. A significant development in the Nottinghamshire Scheme was the establishment of the Joint Management Committee with responsibility for community use throughout the year, during and beyond the school day.

The Head Teacher's role in each case was principally concerned with the school programme, while being an ex officio member of the joint committee and working closely with the manager responsible to

the Joint Committee which had the important function of promoting the wider range of activities for all age groups. The partners in the early Nottinghamshire Schemes elected to place the responsibility for the day to day management of the centre in the hands of an officer and staff responsible to the Joint Committee, not the Education Committee alone, while having the power to allocate controlled community situations within the school time-table where spare capacity created opportunity.

With the publication of D.E.S. Circular 2/70, "A Chance to Share", new relationships have necessarily been developed in schools to adapt to the new concept. These have been embraced in management structures which include extended public use both on a casual basis and in a more formal way through an education authority's youth and adult programmes. A Community Users' Association was established at the Abraham Moss Centre with a view to generating and supporting initiative and self help. The Principal has an overview of the complex as manager.

In respect of planning and design, recent joint schemes, such as the Abraham Moss Centre and the Sutton Centre, have shown a movement towards the fuller integration of community schools with other Local Authority Services. These new schools have formed the core of a comprehensive urban development and have included a vast range of cultural, physical recreation and social opportunities, adjacent services for careers advice, health, libraries and museums. When associated with the integration of sixth form and further education facilities, shops and appropriate parking spaces, it is seen that the basic school provision has become the growth point of

community development. At present in a variety of ways reflecting local circumstances, available resources and opportunities operating at a particular time of the school's development, attempts have been made through design and management of new facilities to meet the needs of the community and the individual - the pupil, the teenager, the family and the pensioner.

Developments in County Durham and more recently in South Tyneside, show the considerable interest shown in the many variations which have been developed around the theme of integrating community provision with basic school provision. It is clear that early schemes are making a positive social impact extending beyond the purely physical and economic advantages of increased facilities for schools and further leisure opportunities for the broader community. It is equally clear that the success or failure of shared facilities bears a direct relationship to the trust, confidence and regard that partners have for each other's point of view. In the last of the criteria that George and Teresa Smith set out as those which identify community schools, they point to the school which seeks to influence social change in the community. They indicate that to do this the school will need some element of local control and accountability and acknowledge that there is little evidence of major change in the control of schools. However, the examples of community schools in England and Wales which have featured in this study show some change in the role of the school in the community. They all incorporate some elements of the criteria laid down in the Community Schools document, albeit longer opening hours, community use of building and community participation.

In a number of the schemes examined, in particular those of South Tyneside, it becomes evident that the extent of local control or accountability is still minimal and in many cases the broad base of education in a community school is still not fully understood by the partners involved. Management roles can be confused without a full appreciation of the assumption that the purpose of management should be the services of the exercise not the master.

It would appear that all of the schools and local authorities studied fulfil some of the criteria for identifying types of community school as set out by George and Teresa Smith in their Inspectorate Bulletin. In particular, they all serve a complete geographic area and are concerned with a complete age group of an area.

Some of the schools studied show particular concern for a broad approach to education and have produced new forms of curriculum. Countesthorpe was particularly concerned with a new approach to the curriculum with new levels of participation through staff and student involvement in a resources approach to learning. Abraham Moss was also very much committed to resource-based learning, in particular to creating an environment in which pupils were not entirely dependent upon the teacher for their learning. In the Sutton Centre the aim was to bring the school from its traditional isolation into a close relationship with the community.

The same schools which fulfilled aspects of the third category of the Smiths' guidelines, that is new forms of curriculum and new roles and institutions, also fulfilled the fourth category - that involving a greater integration of other agencies working to the same end, although Countesthorpe was less involved in this area than the

Abraham Moss and Sutton Centres. The latter, in line with recent developments in the Cambridgeshire Colleges, provided facilities for health, child care, careers, in some cases library and in Abraham Moss a very wide integration of statutory and voluntary organisations. All made provision for the youth service and adult education.

As indicated by George and Teresa Smith, the idea of local control and accountability was less clear cut. All the schools studied provided management structures representing the users and other representatives of the community. Most would claim to be conscious of the need to be more accountable and responsive to local pressure and all have some local control. In five community colleges in Cambridgeshire, including Sawston, increasing signs of local control and accountability are shown in the self-budgeting experiment now operating, and Countesthorpe displayed ambitious innovation in community control within the organisation by its experimental staff management. Accountability was shown in the moderation of certain innovations, brought about by pressure from outside the school to which Countesthorpe had to respond.

"A Working Party on Community Schools", Paper 1 (1979), produced by the National Union of Teachers following a circular issued to local divisions, led to information being supplied by Avon, Birmingham, Bradford, Clwyd, Durham, Dyfed, Essex, Guernsey, Gwynedd, Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Manchester, Rochdale, Sheffield, South Tyneside, Somerset, Staffordshire, Suffolk, Tameside, Wigan, Wirral, Wolverhampton, Liverpool and Leicester. Each of these areas indicated that community provision existed in the schools. This provision varied from one school, Lawrence Weston in Avon, to the many community colleges of Leicestershire.

The report highlighted the wide variety of interpretations of the community school concept at present operating in England and Wales. Descriptions were given of the extensive community provision at Abraham Moss Centre, Manchester, one of the best known community schools in the country, the primary and secondary community schools of Durham, the wide divergence of provision in Hampshire, the campus schools of Sheffield and the community education approach in Somerset. This endorsed the statement of George and Teresa Smith that there is no blueprint for community schools in England and Wales. The management structure, staffing, physical provision, extent of sharing facilities and amount of community involvement varied considerably.

The N.U.T. set up the Working Party in response to the increasing number of requests from local associations and individual members for guidance on management, conditions of service, payments and other issues thrown up by the shared use of educational plant. It was clear from the findings published in the Working Paper that in many areas uncertainty existed about the management of community provision in schools and in some areas a lack of conviction of the benefits to be derived from the community's sharing educational premises.

The Working Paper indicates that although community schools are now accepted and well established in a number of areas in England and Wales, many other areas are still considering the implications raised by the setting up of these schools.

CHAPTER 3

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF MINISTRY CIRCULAR 2/70

"A CHANCE TO SHARE"

(i) Durham County

Durham County was a forerunner in the development of Community Associations. The commitment of the county to the growth of centres is amply shown in a study by Derek Hanson¹. In the 1950s and 60s there was a rapid increase in the number of Community Associations, the result of the willingness on the part of Central Government and Local Authorities to provide premises in localities where community activities were likely to succeed. Occasionally such provision was initially to fail in its purpose for communities do not develop just because a meeting place has been provided; but from the lessons learned, the spontaneous growth of such Associations was encouraged by many local Authorities being prepared to talk with and assist those community growths which rose to the surface in new towns and the ever increasing suburbs of established places.

As outlined earlier, in August 1964 the Government urged local authorities to carry out reviews to determine the extent of further provision for sport and recreation, suggesting collaboration between Local Authorities and other interested bodies. The Sports Complex on the School Campus in South Wales is an example of this provision. In the North East we have the Ponteland Centre and Billingham Forum.

1 Hanson, D. "The Development of Community Centres in County Durham 1919-1968", M.Ed. thesis, 1971.

Previous to this, the Albermarle Report of 1960 reiterated that effort was not being made to absorb school leavers into sport in society after they had left school and suggested that this "gap" could be bridged if more "dual use" facilities existed. The Albermarle recommendations pointed the way to a greater awareness of the need for sports stadia, swimming pools, badminton and squash courts, etc., at a time when the needs of the enlarging secondary schools for such facilities, with their curricular aims for an increasing adult orientated age group of senior pupils, came closer to matching those of a wider community.

In the following years the joint planning concept gathered momentum. A number of authorities recognised that large schools appearing on building programmes could contribute positively towards the provision of leisure opportunities. School facilities were modified, the addition of financial resources other than those for school building allowing the provision of recreation and social facilities not normally found in the school brief. The development of community orientated schools enabled individuals to fulfil their leisure aspirations not only through organised classes but by sessions set aside for individual family or club and society participation. During 1965 at Egremont in Cumberland, the new comprehensive school by an integration of District Council capital, was modified considerably in design to include community specification.

In Nottinghamshire, the physical education departments of four comprehensive schools were modified to create community leisure centres.

In the document, "A Chance to Share", issued in February 1970, local authorities were asked to review their arrangements for

consultation and co-operation with other departments within the same authority and also within groups concerned with community facilities. "This will ensure that every possible opportunity for dual provision is fully exploited". The Circular continues, "a successful dual provision also involves quite complex local negotiations and the prospective partners to a scheme need to know clearly what their prospective commitments in terms of capital and running costs are likely to be". The document concluded "the concept of dual provision is still comparatively in its infancy." Local authorities throughout the country have been finding, with varying degrees of success, new ways of making the best use of their educational facilities. To attempt to achieve the right co-operative approach in both planning and the day to day managements of multiple use schemes a working party was set up. The report, "Towards a Wider Use", was published in 1976 and noted in the introductory comments widespread misapprehension of the real meaning between dual use and joint provision. The report used the following definitions:

""Dual Use" refers to the shared use of facilities by members of the public for whom the facilities were not primarily intended: "Joint Provision" is a more recent concept and usually involves the co-operation of two or more authorities in the joint planning and provision of facilities. Generally it is an education authority and a local authority who combine in a dual provision scheme to provide facilities which will be used by school and public, and will be better than either authority could afford individually. In other cases, for example in a metropolitan district or some London Boroughs, two or more committees of the same authority may combine their resources in a similar manner."³

3 Towards a Wider Use - A report of an inter-association working party on joint provision and dual or multiple use of facilities for recreational use by the community. Chairman, Ellis S. Hillman, 1976. Issued by: Association of County Councils, Association of District Councils, Association of Metropolitan Authorities.

The report acknowledged that joint provision could be extended beyond the field of sport to a wider range of social and community facility. They considered that any scheme should bring mutual benefit and improvement to all contributors and noted: "It is particularly important that the primary business of the school - if a school is involved - namely that of educating the child in the best possible circumstances, should not be made more difficult by any arrangements for joint provision or dual use."

This then was the climate within which Durham County reviewed its position with regard to community provision. Although strongly committed to the development of Community Associations they now considered community provision in schools. In 1968 Dr. W. Reid, now Sir William Reid, on behalf of the Coal Industry Welfare Organisation, urged Durham Education Authority to consider the possibilities of a Campus style site when developing schools or building new areas, where facilities would then be made available for outdoor recreation, youth activities and the development of the adult community. Mr. D.H. Curry, the then Deputy Director of Education for Durham, welcomed Dr. Reid's observations. Discussions began which led to the setting up of a Working Party by the Durham Education Assembly in 1973.

A pilot scheme for 'shared use' of school premises was begun at Hedworthfield Secondary School arising from a meeting held at the school in May 1971. The meeting was attended by the Mayor and Deputy Mayor of Jarrow, Officials from the County Council, the Youth Officer, Headmaster, H.M. Inspector from the Department of Education and Science and local Councillors. The proposed 'Community College' was to be

set up within the school which was situated on a new housing estate lacking in community facilities and undergoing the growing pains of any new community. It was indicated to the meeting that the idea was to establish a place where people could have the chance to take part in community activities. In the words of Mr. Angus, Youth Officer for Durham County; "where people could learn some of the formal subjects in education but could also be engaged in social education". It meant having the use of premises where all ages could be together as a whole community.

He stated that Hedworthfield had been built primarily as a school but it was a pity for it to lie idle in the evenings when people with free time could participate in interests which they enjoyed. Hedworthfield was a good area in which to experiment and to have a pilot scheme whereby the school could be extended for use during the day and also in the evenings.

There was already a strong community flavour in the school. The school had plenty of space and various facilities which could be used on a shared basis and Durham County Council was prepared to co-operate in this idea.

Mr. Angus hoped that there would be joint programming and to establish this it was proposed to set up an Advisory Steering Committee to work with the staff at the school and voluntary organisations to find out the needs of the neighbourhood, and what the people wanted to do to enjoy their leisure time.

Mr. Sharp, Assistant Director for Education for County Durham, expressed the County Council's concern at the expense of providing leisure facilities and said that they were taking a serious look at

what could be done to provide more leisure facilities from existing resources. He stated that the majority of resources were probably already on the ground in the shape of schools. Comprehensive schools had a great deal to offer the community in the way of meeting rooms, practical and recreational facilities and the Education Authority was keen for the idea of a Community Association or College to go ahead. The success depended on the will of the community to make it a success.

Following the pilot scheme at Hedworthfield, schemes were begun in other parts of the County: Eaglescliffe in the extreme South of County Durham extended its facilities to community use, Pelton Roseberry and Sedgfield both extended their existing 'shared use' to invite a wider community usage. Sedgfield, another early scheme experienced some difficulty from the start in that the school was an open plan Secondary School, open access to all parts of the building creating organisational problems. The existing well-established Community Association in the village viewed the 'shared facility' concept with some suspicion and appeared reluctant to share any management responsibility with the school. In the Northern part of the county, Perth Green Secondary School, neighbouring Hedworthfield, accepted the principle of 'shared use' and developed on similar lines to Hedworthfield.

Meanwhile, in Boldon interesting developments were taking place. For many years the employees at Boldon Colliery had been dissatisfied with the social and recreational facilities provided by their Welfare Scheme and wanted in addition, a swimming bath and more up to date sporting and recreational outlets. It was at Boldon that Dr. Reid's

suggestion to Durham County Council of a 'Campus style' development with additional resources supplied by other organisations for improved facilities was put into operation. The Coal Industry Social Welfare Organisation suggested to Boldon Urban District Council and the County Council that it would be prepared to make a substantial cash provision (£60,000) for new buildings at the school, intended to serve the whole community, the existing school buildings also to be made available, the whole scheme thus involving shared use for the inhabitants of the Boldon neighbourhood.

With the acceptance by Durham County Council of the policy of school facilities being more readily available for community as well as school use, and its encouragement of outside interests to invest money in developing schools to either improve or extend facilities, a working party was established by the Durham Education Assembly to investigate the problems of such dual purpose projects and advise on their solution. Taking into account the fact that several schools in the County had started 'shared facility' schemes, the Education Assembly felt there was a need to consider the philosophy of shared use and the organisational problems involved. The composition of the working party included the Assistant Director of Education, Chief Inspector, Youth and Community Officer, Principal of Durham Technical College, several Secondary Head Teachers and a Head Teacher to represent Primary Schools. Early discussions disclosed that this was a new concept to many although each member of the working party understood the dual use situation where the buildings, built solely with school requirements in mind, were used by clubs and societies of the local community in the evenings and at weekends. In Durham County

this was arranged by independent hire of the school premises through the Divisional Education Officer. They experienced some early difficulty in defining other aspects of shared use. Together with the description of sharing outlined above, they decided that 'Shared Facilities' quite simply implied an arrangement whereby the premises and facilities of the school are used both by the school and members of the community. The working party outlined two further situations where sharing may take place: new developments where institutions other than the authority building the school contribute money to provide resources which would not otherwise be available to the school, with the condition that both school and additional resource will be open to use both by the school and public; secondly, premises which are built and planned solely by the Education Authority which from the outset may be intended to cater for both school and community use. It will be seen that although these descriptions of 'shared use' may broadly cover the patterns of organisations there are many variations of these definitions. It was noticeable that the findings of the working party were more concerned with the organisational problems of 'shared use' than with the philosophy of the schemes. Nevertheless important sentences such as, "Basically, however, it was considered that the description of 'shared facilities' had not so much to do with the buildings and how they were financed as with the attitude of the users and the way in which sharing is organised"⁴, appear early in the report. Acknowledgement is made of the scant reference to the purpose, intent and philosophy of the project and the following brief recommendations were made:

4 Report of the Working Party on 'Shared Facilities', Durham Education Assembly, 1973.

- (a) "Dual use could enable facilities to be provided for the use of both schools and the public which would not otherwise be available anywhere in the community. Thus both the school and the community would benefit. Schools in a time of rapidly rising costs, would gain facilities which the Education Authority on its own could never afford, and communities would have access to amenities which would be more generous than their own unaided efforts would be likely to produce.
- (b) The school would become a focal point in the community. It would be seen in a new light, not just as a school but as an organised part of the community, accepted by pupils and adults as the natural centre for learning, vocational training, recreation and personal development.
- (c) It would moreover make for a fuller utilisation of school buildings which represent a high capital outlay, yet which now tend to stand unused for long periods of time.
- (d) The sharing of facilities can help to bridge the gap between the different age groups through their association in a centre which is organised to cater for all ages from school child to old age pensioner and where mixing will arise naturally.
- (e) Dual use of premises based on schools can encourage school leavers to continue leisure and educational activities in facilities which are familiar to them and with staff whom they know."⁵

5 Report of the Working Party on 'Shared Facilities', op. cit., 1973.

These recommendations, scant though they may be, illustrate some of the community concepts of Halsey and Midwinter. Halsey acknowledged the ambiguity of the term community school: "There is no national blueprint for the community school"⁶. It may simply be a facility for the adult or pre-school population when not used for the school age group, a school attended by all school-age children in a given catchment area. It may be interpreted as a school whose teaching activities are influenced by close links with parents and other community groups, its curriculum acknowledging the social experience of the pupils. It may even extend beyond the normal educational processes to actively bring about social change. The economic arguments for opening the schools to the wider community were readily recognised by members of the working party. A considerable capital investment is made in schools, their facilities are frequently superior to non-school facilities and in some cases, i.e. Hedworthfield, may be the only ones available.

The concept of the community school was a central element in the four action research projects in the Educational Priority Study led by Halsey. The Liverpool project which gave prominence to social education suggested that the school could be involved in community regeneration. The Durham Working Party was more cautious in its observation that the school could become a natural centre for learning, vocational training, recreation and personal development.

The members of the working party indicated their concern that practical recommendations were required rather than philosophical comments. They chose as of prime importance the organisational

6 Halsey, A.H. Educational Priority, Vol. 1, London, H.M.S.O., 1972, p. 189.

management of the scheme. It was encouraging to note they were conscious of the difficulty of making recommendations with regard to the overall control of shared facilities considering the different nature of the organisations. A number of suggestions were made as to the establishment of a Management Committee responsible through the Head Teacher to the Education Authority. The importance of the Head Teacher in shared facilities was readily acknowledged. It was understood that he would have a great influence over the success or otherwise of the schemes and the greater his involvement, the more likely the enthusiasm and support of the group involved. The working party spent many hours discussing facilities to be shared. It was at this time that a number of members expressed their apprehension of the open door approach to sharing. They were noticeably concerned about the need for control and supervision. This is clearly seen in the report, with two full pages taken up to spell out the nature of the sharing envisaged with a special section indicating where areas of the school should not be used or at least should strictly be controlled. The idea of community involvement in planning was expressed with the provision of specific community accommodation to foster community concern and interest. A fairly exhaustive list of suggestions concerning facilities to be shared was outlined in the report, many of these readily recommending themselves. Throughout the report we find evidence of some caution on the part of the schools to dual use. References are made to need for certain safeguards, control and supervision. It is significant that members of the working party felt a need to specifically refer to areas of the school which should not be open to the community. The report referred to the need to 'shut off' areas of the building. Specific reference

was made to the difficulties of open-plan school. Staff and sixth form accommodation was regarded as somewhat sacrosanct. Concern was expressed of the possible over-use of some facilities, in particular playing fields. Further discussion within the document concerned caretaking, secretarial help, use of equipment, repair and maintenance of buildings, and storage. Social facility was seen to be of prime importance but caution was expressed over the provision of bar facilities and although some difficulty was foreseen under the present stringency of Public Health rules it was thought this could be overcome. It was recommended that newly built community schools should have separate restaurant facilities.

Coincidental with the setting up of the Working Party on Shared Facilities in 1973 by the Durham Education Assembly, a questionnaire was sent out to schools asking for opinions about the dual use of facilities in educational establishments. The observations and recommendations they received expressed general interest and approval, tempered with caution: "... I feel that while in sympathy with its motives I am not convinced of its practicability" and "... although we fully appreciate the fact that the community could derive great benefits from the use of school facilities, we have certain misgivings". The positive responses to the principle of dual use of facilities were forcibly expressed in some cases: "Head Teachers should be, carefully and most tactfully, converted to the view that 'Shared Facilities' are the 'in thing' of the 1970s and that the advantages for them and their staffs are very real - not to mention the benefits to the children, of course". One group of Head Teachers expressed complete support for the idea of 'shared facilities': "All Head Teachers

welcomed the initiative of the Education Authority in its approach to 'Shared Facilities', and gave wholehearted support to the principle. They looked forward to the time when purpose-built School/Community complexes or buildings would be available". Although many of the responses expressed fears and uncertainty about a concept of community use of school which was new to most Head Teachers there was no evidence of a complete rejection of the proposed wider use of school premises. The least enthusiastic response concerned itself not with a condemnation of 'shared use' but an insistence for school priority in such schemes: "While appreciating the validity of the view that school premises and equipment represent valuable capital investment which should be used to the full for economic reasons and that such use as may be proposed would be of benefit no doubt to the community in general, it was felt that it was of the utmost importance that the first and most important use of such premises and equipment should be for the benefit of the school. In order to ensure that any additional use should not prejudice the efficiency of the school's work it was suggested that all such use should be in the light of an expansion of the functions of the school under the overall control of the Head Teacher. This might necessitate the appointment of teacher/wardens who would maintain the immediate contact with the outside organisations but they would be members of the school staff and responsible to the Head Teacher". This comment by a group of Head Teachers in the South of the country indicates the strong suspicions that still exist in the minds of many Head Teachers and school staffs of entry into the school by members of the community. There is a suggestion that the function of the school may be weakened by 'shared use' particularly through usage. It is noticeable that very strong emphasis is placed upon school control through the Head

Teacher and Teacher/Warden. Significant is the comment "outside organisations". The responses of this group indicated their concern about the over-use of some school facilities as has been experienced in some schools at the present time. In summing up, they favoured the setting up of 'youth wings' and 'leisure centres' available to the school but the first concern being their use by the community. This was the pattern of development of the 1950s as previously described in references to the schemes in Glamorgan. This then was the nature of the response to a request for information circulated to panels of Head Teachers covering the whole of the County of Durham; responses varying from enthusiastic approval to cautious, controlled acceptance. An interesting feature of the enquiry was the weight given to the discussion of the economic argument in favour of 'shared use' schemes. The least receptive of the responses received by the Education Assembly accepted the premise that school buildings "represent valuable capital investment" and that this was a valid argument in favour of use by the community. Many other responses referred to the wisdom of opening these resources to the wider community: "It is desirable that expensive plant and equipment should be made available to the whole community". In welcoming the concept of shared facilities one Head Teacher Panel indicated clearly the development they would envisage: "The sharing of expensive provision between schools, such as Learner Swimming Pools which are at present shared, extended to include common use of Language Laboratories, Halls and Stages, Band and Orchestral tuition, the ownership and operation of a school bus, etc." This was the only reference made in the survey to inter-school use of resource; however this group then described the sort of facility which should be shared:

"We suggest:

- i. Youth Service facilities: play/common room with coffee bar:
use of specialist rooms; Games/P.E. provision;
- ii. Community Association facilities; Swimming bath, squash
courts, athletics tracks, sports halls, tennis, etc.;
- iii. Libraries; in larger Secondary Schools ancillary help with
school Library is essential; many local authorities overcome
this by secondment during training, of persons from County
Library staff. The sharing of Library facilities between
school and community would solve many problems;
- iv. So too the provision of School Nurses and Clinics;
- v. Clubs for the physically handicapped, creches/nursery
schools could well be placed in with schools, giving
opportunity for the involvement of senior pupils;
- vi. When programming new schools in new residential areas, some
thought should be given to the desirability of siting offices
of Youth Employment and Social Workers within the school
boundaries".

Within the responses received from groups of Head Teachers based throughout the County of Durham were expressions of visionary enthusiasm, cautious optimism and uncompromising scepticism.

Of significance was the scant reference to the philosophy of shared use as expressed by Henry Morris, A.N. Fairbairn, C. Poster and other exponents of the community school. This may have been influenced by the wording of the communique sent to the schools with its reference to "dual use of facilities in educational

establishments", the use of the term "shared facilities" and acknowledgement of Ministry Circular 2/70: this may have set the climate for the organisational references which were prevalent in the replies. Comments such as: "The neighbourhood school as a focal point in the life of the local community is a concept most school teachers would accept". Opinions such as: "Of vital importance is the concept of some continuity of influence on the personal development of youngsters in their teens", were few and far between. The report is littered with comments concerned with supervision, overuse, mis-use and control, vitally important factors in the management of 'shared use' schemes but nonetheless depressing in their intensity. Time after time the responses indicated that participants in that enquiry required guarantees on safeguarding before they were prepared to give their approval. These comments consisted of reasonable and well balanced observations: "The success or otherwise of Shared Facilities will largely depend on good communications and mutual understanding between all parties concerned. Good will does not just happen, it has to be well planned initially and subsequently well nurtured". Balanced against this comment are references to mis-use. The complaints of the Heads of the three schools were mainly about damage done to buildings and furniture as a result of Youth Club activities. The schools suffered in varying degrees, but the worst damage was done in schools where the Youth Clubs had access to the main buildings and classrooms. It was generally agreed that the main reason for the vandalism and damage to school property was due to the lack of adequate supervision both during the activities and also because of the late arrival of the supervisors. The rejection by this group was underlined by the further recommendations:

1. "Premises isolated from the main buildings to be used where possible;
2. Numbers to be limited to 20 for each supervisor;
3. More adequate supervision before, during and after activities;
4. If possible members of staff of the schools where the activities are held should be encouraged to become supervisors. In order to bring this about, payment for supervisors may be increased to Evening Class standards".

When questionnaires circulated to the schools were returned, they referred consistently to fears of damage to equipment, the need for more money for maintenance and repairs and increased staffing. The problems of management were regularly mentioned. Paramount was the question of ultimate responsibility for the administration of the 'shared use' complex. All the returns indicated that this should be the Head Teacher/Warden. Little mention was made of the setting up of management committees although useful contributions included:

- (a) "The Head Teacher should be an ex-officio member of the committee of the Community Centre so that at all times he may be able to express an opinion regarding whether or not any projected events of the Community Centre will infringe the efficiency of his school. I think possibly a power of veto or appeal against non-compatible projects may be necessary. At the same time a good Head Teacher will be a tower of strength and will work in concert with the Committee in furtherance of the most laudable social ends".

- (b) "Joint Committees for school or complex comprising Head Teacher(s) or representative(s) Youth Leaders and members of their Management Committees".
- (c) "We feel that a Management Committee, representative of the Community organisations and the school will be necessary to control the use of the premises and the facilities, and that each organisation using the facilities would need to be conscious of and insistent upon firm supervision".

The Report of the Working Party on 'Shared Facilities' indicated that it was the belief of members that of major importance to the success of the enterprises was that organisational management was firmly established on sound lines. In recommending the establishment of a management structure the members experienced extreme difficulty. Discussions indicated that the nature of schemes may differ and that no standard organisation would cater for all requirements. Eventually a set of principles were suggested as guide lines for proposed schemes. In these it was agreed that the Head Teacher was a key figure and should have overall responsibility.

In the reports submitted to the Durham Education Assembly only one panel referred directly to D.E.S. Circular 2/70, "A Chance to Share", which requested local authorities to review their arrangements for consultation with other local authorities and with any other body concerned with community facilities. They indicated their approval of the concept of joint use of facilities by the school and the community on:

- (a) "Economic grounds - the maximum use of costly and scarce resources.
- (b) Social grounds - because the social life of a local community could be enriched by access to specialist building and equipment.
- (c) Educational grounds - because shared use of facilities would undoubtedly strengthen connections between the local community (and possibly parents as part of the community) which could result in a beneficial off-spin for education in the form of better and deeper community/parent/teacher relationships".

The report indicated that no specific mention was made of direct community planning at "grass roots" level in Circular 2/70. Members felt this was of prime importance in inculcating direct participation in local concerns and fostering feelings and attitudes of responsibility in the use of community facilities and encouraging sympathetic reaction on the part of local people to the schools. The comment in Paragraph 3 of Circular 2/70 to long term planning was recommended and once again reference was made to the importance of local community participation in the early stages of planning. In their references to financing, staffing and facilities to be shared, the panel indicated the steps required for consultation with the agencies involved in order that a workable and acceptable policy be resolved.

It is important to note that the findings of the Working Party on 'Shared Facilities', of which the writer was a member, coincided

with the reports received from the schools throughout the County, and although they were not a significant factor in the drafting of the report, they voiced the thoughts of many members of the Working Party. Though in favour of the concept of 'Shared Facilities', both the Report of the Working Party on 'Shared Facilities' and the comments received from the schools indicate the conservative way in which they wished to approach proposed schemes. The completed report was then circulated to schools in County Durham for further comment. Now the opportunity was given for specific comment, for here were a number of recommendations to be debated. Once again the responses were consistent in that they indicated a cautious approach and a wish to see control mechanisms implemented. It was evident from the responses that an element of teacher control was required. Reference was constantly made to 'staff representation' appointment of a Teacher/Warden, "the use of the premises by outside bodies should only be granted with the full and final approval of the Head Teacher", "We consider it essential that the person appointed to assist the Head Teacher in the running of the 'shared facilities' should have a teaching qualification, should undertake some teaching duties in the school and should give school interests priority".

It would appear that many teachers viewed the introduction into the school organisation of community activities as something of a threat. Scant reference was made to any enhancement to the school processes through 'sharing' with the community. Indeed, on occasion, comments were scathing: "The kitchen is open to all people using the school - it has been known for children to dance on the hot plate", "Rubbish is left lying about - it must be borne in mind that the

prime use of school facilities within the prescribed school hours is for the benefit of the school child and any act which might dilute the child's education in any way should be emphatically refused". Observations from the schools commenting on the findings of the Working Party ranged from the mildly questioning to the severely critical. The traditional role of the school, some felt, was under attack. One group questioned the assumptions made in the documents: "Is the traditional role of the school so outmoded and unsatisfactory that it must change?", "Is it better to impose a new role upon the school or better to allow a school to evolve gradually towards a new role in response to demand?", "Is the community itself ready for this change in the role of the school?"

It is hoped that the survey may offer some answers to these hypotheses. Two important factors are becoming apparent and they will need careful consideration. In promoting the philosophy of 'shared use' it is necessary to acknowledge that we are considering a new and, to some minds, revolutionary role for the school in the community. Secondly, in the question of management lies the key to success. Can the Head run the shared facilities complex and the school "in the same way as he is now responsible for the running of his school"? This role as co-ordinator may prevent him from devoting his full energies to organising the education of his pupils. A valid management structure must be able to cope with the problems created by misuse of equipment, mistrust between groups, problems of smoking and drink, staffing and the educational needs of the organisation which must be of prime importance.

It is hoped that the high hopes entertained of 'shared facilities' complexes will be realised and not dashed by the difficulties of operating such a scheme. The survey may show the fears of one Durham Head Teacher to be unfounded: "Too much depends upon pious hopes of sharing in the right spirit, ample provision for cleaning and maintenance and facilities not being overused".

However, despite the forebodings of some, the term 'shared facilities' was becoming a familiar phrase in the schools of County Durham. The report of the Working Party instigated by the Durham Education Assembly had been circulated to schools and widely discussed. It became accepted policy in the county and schools were encouraged to develop community links. New Community Schools, such as Ox Close, Washington, were designed and built.

(ii) A.T.O./D.E.S. Course - Durham Institute of Education, 1974

Following the interest evolved from the development of a number of 'shared use' schemes throughout the geographical County of Durham, the A.T.O./D.E.S. set up a course in 1974 to consider the implications and practice of such schemes. Groups set themselves an area of shared facilities to investigate. One group decided to look at basic provision for schools wishing to develop youth and community work. Their visits were restricted to two schools in Hartlepool with purpose-built youth and community wings. The findings of the group indicated separate use: the 'wings' were 'adjacent to' not 'part of' the school. The group pointed out the importance of the personality of the Youth and Community Tutor and his relationship with the Head Teacher and the staff of the school. They commented: "The finest

resource was co-operation and a willingness on both sides to understand each other's problems and discuss solutions". Once again we have a view of separatism rather than community. They readily acknowledged this view in a later comment in the report: "... too much youth and not enough community".

Another group attempted to determine to what extent pupils and adults are mixed during the day in a Community School, and what advantages, if any, may accrue from this 'mix'.

In the course of the study there has been little evidence of significant mixing of non-teaching adults and school children in lessons, although in some of the Leicestershire schemes, at the Abraham Moss Centre and at the Sutton Centre, mention is made of such provision.

It is unfortunate that the group based their findings on one visit only to the Rowlinson Campus, Sheffield. Although their conclusions lack validity, even in isolation they are of some significance:

"Pupils in the 11-16 years range were not involved with non-teaching adults to any greater extent than those in the average secondary school. Non-teaching adults were not present in the classrooms involved in lessons with pupils".

"Adult participation in Sixth Form classes was extremely limited. The Adult Education courses (non-vocational) would allow for a 'mix' of older pupils and adults (e.g. parents sharing practical or cultural interests with their children) but outside the normal school curriculum".

"Curriculum, in general, was not affected to any great extent by the presence of adults on the school site".

"The pupils gained considerably by the concentration of resources on the one site. A greater range of facilities and equipment was available during the day for use by the pupils than could normally be expected even for a comprehensive school of 2,000 pupils".

These are comments about a school in an authority committed to community school development. Two important factors are significant: little involvement by adults during the normal day time-table of the school and no significant curriculum change.

Although these comments lack validity in the fact that they are based upon one visit to a school, it is difficult to discover many schemes where evidence of adult involvement during the normal school time-table, and curriculum change exist. Nottinghamshire is one of the few authorities who have pursued a policy of allocating controlled community situations within the school time-table where spare capacity creates the opportunity. Stewart Wilson, Head Teacher of the Sutton Centre School, was given freedom to offer an integrated curriculum cutting across traditional subject boundaries, combined with a progressive approach to discipline, dual use of the pupils' facilities by adults and community groups and an externally constructed examination system (Mode 3 C.S.E.). The study of the Sutton Centre led by Barry Elsey and Ken Thomas indicates some measure of success in the change of curriculum at the school and notes, perhaps with some surprise, the high percentage of parents who had used workshop and cookery facilities (15%), had attended an adult or family class (21%) or had joined a class with school pupils (11%). They did

maintain that the high percentage of parents involved during the normal school time-table may be due to some school classes taking place in the evening eleventh session.

Little evidence has been found of a community orientated curriculum as supported by Midwinter, who argued that with such a curriculum pupils are likely to learn traditional skills more effectively. He comments that it is more purposeful for pupils to develop techniques to help the majority to act constructively upon the environment in which most youngsters are likely to continue. Cyril Poster is critical of Midwinter. He states that through his concern with social problems he has not acknowledged the importance of intellectual pursuits and those aspects of learning which do not necessarily have immediate social relevance. Observations of the work of community schools in South Tyneside, in particular Hedworthfield and Boldon, show that the term 'community school' does not necessarily mean that they operate a community curriculum, indeed admitting the community to the school may not have shown any direct influence upon the curriculum.

The third group did concern themselves more closely with the concept of community/shared facilities education. They were concerned about the establishment of the appropriate type of 'centre' best suited to implement the concept and match the associated community. They acknowledged that an existing school, secondary or junior, makes a logical nucleus for a community/shared facilities establishment. The group indicated their interest in the management of schemes which integrated school-type education for young people and adult leisure education. Once committed to providing a community/shared facilities

centre for all ages and demands, it is the management set up which then becomes absolutely important. It was interesting that this group, having considered many of the difficulties arising from 'shared use', suggested that social advantages and benefits, various as they may be, outweighed any disadvantages.

The findings of the fourth group were of interest in that they decided to look at a number of schemes and enquire into their organisation. They visited two community colleges in Leicestershire - Stonehill and Brockington - and the established centres, Wyndham School, Egremont; Sutton Centre, Nottinghamshire and Abraham Moss Centre, Manchester. Without describing the various institutions visited, the group put forward a number of observations which they thought were significant and of interest. Certainly significant was the opening remark of their report: "In every case, whatever the institution was called and whatever facilities it had to offer, a clear advantage was seen in terms of improved and/or greater contact with parents. For a school to assume the matter or adopt some or all of the philosophy of the Community Centre/School/College, meant that there were significantly greater opportunities of all kinds of contacts with parents in the locality". Certainly they were agreed that the Community School which was purpose-built had a considerable advantage in the quantity and quality of additional facilities offered. An important observation was that institutions which acquired the community mantle after the provision of the original buildings did not benefit to the same extent. In fact it was suggested that the additional burdens they were expected to assume made demands on their facilities in excess of the advantages gained.

In considering only the cost-benefit aspect of shared facilities, there is without doubt a very clear advantage in much heavier usage of expensive specialist equipment and facility. It should be recognised that in the majority of cases the economic factor was decisive in the initial thinking. What followed, the justifications and aspects of philosophy may be no more than post-hoc rationalisation. This may not be morally wrong but nevertheless should be taken into account. Once again, the question of maintenance was given some prominence in the findings of this group and they emphasised the need for a generous attitude towards the rates of pay and establishment of cleaners.

In visits to the schools there was evidence of a high degree of staff involvement with a commitment to the notion of community education. It was evident that the institutions enjoyed the advantages of the early, purpose-built comprehensive schools in being able to attract good staff anxious to become involved in pioneering ventures. Other important factors which emerged from the visits included thoughts upon the need for a more flexible attitude towards teachers' contracts, the need for charismatic leadership and a broadly based management for effective control.

The contribution of the group to the A.T.O./D.E.S. Course-Shared Facilities was far reaching in that they criticised the implications of shared use schemes widely. They gave careful consideration both to the concept, philosophy and cost benefit factors. Their brief extended beyond the existing organisations to question the assumptions of the sometimes pious advocates of 'shared facilities'; they suggested that a real danger existed of stifling community

initiative. Perhaps it would become too easy to be an affiliated group with ready access to facilities which may remove the driving force from groups which have existed for many years. They indicated the danger of the institutions becoming all-embracing, they would wish to draw all local groups into the building to justify adequate use of the facilities provided. It was disappointing that the final conference of the course did not apply itself more to the findings of this particular group. They suggested that the purpose-built Community Schools, even with the most lavish provision of financial resource, must contain significant compromises.

Some of the economic arguments and aspects of philosophy have been touched upon in the survey of the situation as it has developed to date. A close look at what actually goes on in a Community School offers significantly greater opportunities for all kinds of contacts with parents. The questions posed are: to what extent are these opportunities of contact an improvement upon those which existed before and how significant is the benefit gained from the improved or increased contact with parents?

(iii) South Tyneside

Hard on the heels of the Durham Education Assembly Working Party on 'Shared Facilities' there followed a number of working parties set up to prepare for the re-organisation of local government. It was to be expected that within the brief of the Education Committee Working Party for the new Borough Council of South Tyneside mention was made of shared facilities. It was also not surprising that, as the new Borough of South Tyneside was to

accept responsibility for three of Durham County's Community Schools, two of which, Hedworthfield and Boldon, were pilot schemes, the findings of the working party endorsed the Durham County recommendation. The report states, "The Borough of South Tyneside Education Committee have accepted the philosophy of 'shared facilities', i.e. where school premises and plant are used for youth and community purposes." In pursuance of this policy, the Education Committee makes available school premises to youth organisations and a variety of adult groups. Adult Education activities also take place in a number of schools throughout the Borough.

The benefits of such an arrangement are two fold. The school can become recognised as a focal point for community life; and full and economic use is made of the facilities available.

The report acknowledges that the existing schemes in the new Borough of South Tyneside, "go much further than the letting schemes outlined above in that there is joint use of educational premises and facilities under an organisation representative of school and community users."

The user organisations referred to in the preceding paragraph operate as "Associations" and offer to their members a wide range of social, recreational and cultural pursuits.

The South Tyneside Report, in acknowledging the recommendations of the previous Report of the Durham County Education Assembly, was more specific in resolving issues such as maintenance, staffing, administration and finance. Appointment of full-time staff was recommended together with the payment of an allowance for Head Teachers. A model constitution was recommended to safeguard the

interests of the Education Authority and give the Associations' Management Committees some power and responsibility. Within the Report of the South Tyneside Education Committee was a suggestion of the need for a wider debate of the facilities to be shared. The report accepts the need for wider and deeper discussion of the concept of 'over use' but questions the Durham statement "Shut off those sections ... which are for school use only". Some may argue the report suggests that apart from such facilities as the Headmaster's Room, the rest should be available for use under agreed procedures.

With the endorsement by the South Tyneside Borough Council of the philosophy of 'shared facilities', the schemes at Perth Green and Hedworthfield continued to develop. Perth Green included within its organisation the nearby purpose-built youth club and the school is now heavily committed to youth and community activities. Hedworthfield has expanded its community activity into the feeder primary schools and both schools now have purpose-built Community Units. The additional buildings at Boldon were completed in October 1975 and the Centre was officially opened in January 1976. The complex is used by a membership in excess of 5,000 and a wide variety of activities keep the building open seven days a week until 11.00 p.m., including the school holiday periods.

A review of the policy and resource allocation for 'shared resources' on South Tyneside indicates a phased and quite rapid development of commitment on the part of the Authority. A study of the Education Committee Reports from 1974 provides a detailed account of that development. Following the adoption by the newly formed

South Tyneside Education Authority of the policy of shared use of school premises, the Education Committee discussed the appointment of four youth and community tutors at Boldon Comprehensive School, Chuter Ede Comprehensive School, Hedworthfield Secondary School and Perth Green Secondary School. Boldon Comprehensive had a previous appointment of a Second Deputy Head Teacher (community) provided by the former Education Authority of Durham County. The advertisement for the posts indicated that applicants should be qualified teachers with experience in Youth and Community work. At the same meeting members considered the Director's proposal of the payment of an allowance (£300) to the Head Teachers responsible for the Authority's approved schemes. He indicated that the reason for granting such an allowance was that the arrangement would give official recognition to the status of such schemes and future applicants for the post of Head Teacher of the schools involved would be aware that, if appointed, they would be required officially to assume responsibility for the scheme. The payment of the allowance would acknowledge the special role played by the Head Teachers in Community School situations. He pointed out that other Local Authorities had adopted such a scheme and the salary scales for Primary and Secondary Head Teachers allowed Local Education Authorities to make such additional payment to qualified Head Teachers. The meeting in July 1974 also approved the construction of a new Youth and Community Centre at Chuter Ede School to replace the former Whiteleas Centre. This was a new venture for the Authority.

In March 1975 four elected members of the Authority were designated to serve on the management committee of Boldon Community Centre, associated with the comprehensive school. It was interesting

to note that at this time Boldon Colliery Welfare Association was not affiliated fully to the "shared use" scheme at Boldon and grant aid was awarded to the Miners' Welfare. It was in May 1975 that the Education Committee considered the proposed rules for the Boldon Community Centre and in June 1975 the merger of the Boldon Community Centre with the Miners' Welfare Scheme was agreed. Following the merger, the Education Committee at a meeting in September 1975 agreed to the proposed Social Club Rules for the Boldon Community Association and these included provision for the supply of intoxicating liquor to the Association's members.

By May 1976 Community Associations were managing "shared use" schemes at Clegwell Comprehensive School, Hedworthfield Secondary School, Perth Green Secondary School, West Park Comprehensive School, Chuter Ede Comprehensive School and Boldon Comprehensive School. Head Teacher allowances were extended to the additional schools. By 1979, ten out of fourteen comprehensive schools in South Tyneside operated shared use schemes.

CHAPTER 4

HOME/SCHOOL RELATIONS

(i) The Importance of Parental Contact with the School

The influence upon educational performance of parental attitudes has been confirmed in many research studies. The Plowden Committee Report, "Children and their Primary Schools" (1967), stated, "One of the essentials for educational advance is a closer partnership between the two parties to every child's education". Schools Council Enquiry 1, "Young School Leavers", indicates that research in this area has in the main compared parental interest with child performance. The Enquiry states: "There seems every reason to suppose that, apart from its effect upon academic success, the interest parents show in what the school is trying to achieve will greatly influence pupils' general attitudes to school"¹.

The Enquiry suggests that there is a lessening of contact between the home and the school at secondary level compared with the primary stage of education. A number of important aspects of relationships between home and school are noted in the report in connection with parents' attitude to school.

"First the delegation of all responsibility for education to the school and, a very important factor, the failure to see the need for any contact unless something is wrong. Second, a very generally held view that they would be interfering if they went to school uninvited. It was clear that for many this needed to be a very specifically personal invitation indeed, 'We would like to go but they have no function to which we can go, Michael never gets a prize so we don't go to prizegiving. We would like to talk to the teachers'. Third a lack of confidence in being

1 Schools Council Enquiry 1, Young School Leavers. H.M.S.O., 1968.

able to have a satisfactory discussion with the teachers if they went."²

The report further comments that on both parents' and teachers' sides, lack of communication between the home and school was a matter for concern.

"Half the parents of 15 year old leavers were anxious to be told more about how their child was getting on at school and a third felt that teachers should to a greater extent consult them about their child. Very generally teachers considered that they needed to know more about the home backgrounds and lives of these pupils in order to carry out their work satisfactorily."³

Enquiry 1

The lessening of contact between home and schools as discovered in Enquiry 1 is supported by the findings of J.M. Bynner, "Parents' Attitudes to Education", a follow up of the parents' interview for Plowden. About the same proportion of parents had visited the head of the secondary school as had visited the primary school head. But at secondary school this first contact with the head had generally been through a talk given by the head to a group of parents rather than a personal contact as at primary school. This reduction in personal contact when the children reach secondary school was also shown by the fact that fewer parents had made subsequent visits to the secondary school than had the primary school parents. The Bynner Report⁴ indicates that the extent of the contact between parents and school was strongly related to the parents' social class.

2 Schools Council Enquiry 1, op. cit., 1968.

3 Ibid.

4 Bynner, J.M. Parents' Attitudes to Education. H.M.S.O., 1972.

Although most parents indicated they were satisfied with the arrangements at the school for seeing the head or other teachers, a number of them did not avail themselves of this opportunity. It was interesting to note that two-thirds of the parents interviewed indicated they would like a teacher to visit them at home. There were indications that working class parents would have liked more information about their children's progress and evidence of a certain amount of alienation from the school amongst those parents.

It is important to remind ourselves that it is all too easy to interpret the non-attendance of certain parents at school functions, open days, etc., as lack of interest. There may be other reasons and it is wrong to assume that every non-attending parent is indifferent to his or her child's progress and development at school. Parental interest manifests itself in many forms from interest right through the spectrum of attitudes to interference or attempted interference. Here is a force which appropriately harnessed can be a power for good.

For some schools the formal relationship provided by a Parent/Teacher Association complete with constitution and rules, officers and accounts, provides the most acceptable machinery for bringing home and school together. A prime function of a Parent/Teacher Association is the establishment of a formal link between home and school, whereby parents can be kept informed, through joint meetings with members of the teaching staff of the aims and activities of the school. It also gives support to the school's activities, this support being shown quite frequently in a tangible

form by contributions towards projects, journeys, etc., or amenities such as swimming pools or technical equipment of various kinds. Not all schools consider it necessary or desirable to have a formally constituted organisation in order to foster good relations between home and school. In many primary schools parents are free to visit the school during school hours to see the school at work. Some schools use a system of appointment when arranging visits for parents to discuss pupils' progress. By an extension of the appointment system a parent can be specially invited to discuss his child's progress and problems. The special invitation is one way of making contact with the parent who never attends an Open or Parents' Evening or, of course, a P.T.A. meeting. A Parents' Evening or meeting is a way of bringing parents to the school, and together. It leaves the question of attendance by teachers quite open. Many teachers prefer this sort of arrangement, taking the view that a P.T.A. by definition places a certain obligation on all teachers to attend. Many schools have Parent Associations which do not require a formal constitution and which meet whenever there are matters which the Head Teacher feels he would like to discuss with parents collectively. Meetings of Parents' Associations can be called, for example, to hear a talk by, and have a discussion with, a medical officer, or a representative of the church, or an expert in a particular field of education. A member of staff may wish to elaborate on some new methods that he is introducing. Such meetings provide the opportunity for parents to voice their opinions on matters of direct concern to their children and at the same time provide useful guidance for the Head and his staff. Controversial issues, such as sex education or

religious education, as well as projected innovations in the curriculum can be usefully and purposefully discussed at such meetings. Parents feel that they know more about the work of the school while at the same time feel that they have made known their own ideas and reservations. In larger schools the Open Evening can be used to bring together parents and teachers concerned with particular sections of the school. It provides the opportunity for the work or problems of an individual child to be discussed, by the parent and teacher against a background of performance by the pupils of the school as a whole or of a particular part of a school. On such occasions work is quite deliberately 'on show', but this acts as a stimulus to conversation and discussion and again results in better mutual understanding.

Lawrence Green points out that middle class parents are well aware of what they want from education:

"What they want may sometimes, in our view, be undesirable - perhaps even the antithesis of education in the sense of culture or of social responsibility. Yet they want it and know how to apply pressure to get what they want."⁵

Jackson and Marsden's "Education and the Working Class" makes the point:

"The schools usually offered an annual opportunity for parents to consult teachers, and of course, it was always possible to make an appointment with the Head. Yet it was clear indeed that these opportunities were only taken up by the more prosperous. These extreme views of education are still regularly encountered in schools; the extreme competitiveness of some parents and complete apathy of others. It is not suggested that the development of more co-operative relations between home and school will solve this

5 Green, L. Parents and Teachers, Partners and Rivals. Allen and Unwin, 1968.

problem but it is suggested that it will go a long way towards helping most parents to be more knowledgeable of the educational system with a view to using rather than just accepting it. Greater contact between parents and school through community participation in the school organisation should give the school the opportunity to show that teachers regard parents as allies. It should give them the opportunity to pass on information about themselves, their views of the school and aspirations for their children."⁶

Lawrence Green states in his book,

"Teachers work more effectively if they try to work with rather than against the parents and the environment. It is beginning to be understood that teachers are not merely givers of knowledge. They are or should be ready to learn more and more about the children they teach. To learn from the children, from their parents, from the community or neighbourhood round the schools means that teachers must look again at their own role, must see it as a dual role leading children to acquire knowledge and good attitudes to learning and social responsibility and also reaching out beyond the child to influence the attitudes of those who have reared the child."⁷

In this connection, J.B. Mays writes,

"The duality of the teacher's role seems inescapable and any refusal on the part of the profession to accept the reality of the situation will result in the ultimate deprivation and disadvantage of their scholars. For this reason it seems to be of paramount importance that a strong link should be created between school and home, and that teachers should make every possible endeavour to secure an adequate working relationship with parents. This may not involve the organisation of a formal association but, whatever form it takes, the distrust and timidity which at present is characteristic of the attitude of many teachers towards collaboration with the home are major obstacles in the way of progress. Moreover the plea of parochial schools that they are already sufficiently integrated into the general life of the neighbourhood is manifestly lacking in foundation."⁸

6 Jackson, B. and Marsden, D. Education and the Working Class. Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966.

7 Green, L. op. cit.

8 Mays, J.B. Education and the Urban Child. Liverpool University Press, 1962, p. 115.

In two surveys carried out by Stephen Wiseman in the Manchester area using a very sophisticated method of factor analysis, evidence has been obtained of how attainment and educability can be much affected by environmental and family factors. Parental attitudes, because of their primacy, were found to be more important than those of teachers and of other children. On the subject of parental attitudes, Wiseman stresses the value to educational attainment of the family which is actively co-operative to education: "la famille educogene"⁹. On the other hand, he pinpoints the debilitating effects of the actively hostile family, and also of the larger group of passive conformists.

J.B. Mays claimed that a good school may have a potentially civilising effect on a whole community, the primary requirement being that the teachers should have an adequate conception both of the nature of society and of their social role, as well as being able to imbue their pupils with formal knowledge.

Mays' main theme is that there is a need for "a new focus of community development, and no institution today so nearly fits this role as the school"¹⁰. Such a school should have closer links with the families of the surrounding locality at many levels. It would be a co-ordinating centre for the whole variety of agencies, associated with social welfare and education in the widest sense of the words. The school would be the local clubhouse, culture centre

9 Wiseman, S. Education and Environment. Manchester University Press, 1964.

10 Mays, J.B. The School in its Social Setting. Longman, 1967.

and advice bureau to which all would naturally turn for guidance, fellowship and enjoyment. In Mays' words, it would be "the psycho-social centre of the neighbourhood"¹¹.

The writer would hope to show from his observations and research that the 'shared facilities' concept of secondary education with its associated community school philosophy should provide a closer and more regular form of contact with the school and consequently overcome the apparent failing in communications between the home and the secondary school as indicated by Enquiry 1 and the Bynner Report.

(ii) The School and the Community

A major theme in the Plowden recommendations on community schools was the value of early parental involvement in the education of their children. In a period when compensatory education was in vogue it was not surprising that the Report hoped "that the biggest effort to develop community schools will be in educational priority areas"¹. The concept of the community school was a central element in the action research projects in the Educational Priority Study led by Halsey. The best known is the Liverpool Project which gave particular prominence to social education "enabling the child to participate fruitfully now and as future citizens in renewing urban society"².

¹¹ Mays, J.B. op. cit.

¹ Plowden Report, p. 47. Midwinter, E. Priority Education, pp. 19, 20. 1972.

² Halsey, A.H. Educational Priority, Vol. 1. London, H.M.S.O., 1972, p. 189.

Midwinter indicated his concern that community education should be a part of community development. He particularly emphasised that a community-orientated curriculum could play an important part in creating discontent on the part of the young and their parents with some aspects of their environment and therefore motivate them into changing it. Midwinter would like to see much more local community control of services such as education, health, social services and law and order. He defines his idea of community as an area of 10,000 to 20,000 people containing four or five "community schools". The difference then between the Morris concept of the school, providing a social, educational and recreational service for a large geographical area, and Midwinter whose concern lies mainly with inequality, is quite marked. He expresses the view that the two major issues that concern community education are the gap between representative and participatory democracy and the gulf between teacher and pupil/parent. Midwinter describes "community" as "a small geographical area in which participation by the community is essential"³.

In studying the development of the community school in the United Kingdom it soon becomes apparent that there is no national blueprint for the community school. The influences of Morris, Plowden and Midwinter can be seen in different schemes promoted by local education authorities.

The Plowden Commission Report on Primary Education (1967) was a major educational force which led to concern over the inability of many schools to provide their pupils with equality of educational

3 Plowden Report, p. 47. Midwinter, E. op. cit.

opportunity. The report commented on "educational priority areas" where housing conditions and levels of income on one side and motivational factors like parental lack of knowledge on the other produce "educationally deprived" youngsters. A recommendation of the Plowden Report was that the concept of "community schools" should be promoted as an attempt to involve parents in the education of their children.

Midwinter, working with Halsey in his Education Priority study, gave prominence to social education, "enabling the child to participate fruitfully now and as future citizens in renewing urban society". The community school was a central element in the research of Halsey; the best known was the Liverpool project from which the above quotation was taken. In the 'E.P.A. Community School' Midwinter suggests,

"There would be an attempt to develop the potential and experience of the city child in his own right with rather less of that escapism with which teachers have superficially attempted to polish the urban child. It has been as though they wanted to paint a quick-dry cultural gloss on to the pupil. The social environmentally-based curriculum is psychologically more accurate. It begins with the child's experience and works purposefully outwards. So much teaching of the urban child has, in the past, postulated new experiences without lifelines from the old.

Surely a radical re-think of the E.P.A. syllabus would, of course, require many changes in the structure of the school and of teaching and it would imply a much more exciting and intimate relation of the school to its catchment area. It means long looks at the school's situation vis-a-vis many social institutions, the most prominent of these being, naturally enough, the home. But the other social and economic amenities around the school might become the hub of a thriving socially-based educational process, rather than the exclusive and sometimes withdrawn agency of education."⁴

4 Midwinter, E. op. cit.

Midwinter's view of social education in the E.P.A. Community School has been strongly criticised. Cyril Poster expresses concern that it is "an attack on intellectual pursuits, condemning any aspect of learning that does not have immediate social relevance"⁵. He feels this to be sectarian and divisive.

Midwinter answers this by pointing out that in a community-orientated curriculum, children are likely to learn traditional skills more effectively. He also indicates that the curriculum should be socially not locally orientated, emphasising that most children are likely to continue in their present environment or one like it. Rennie writes,

"... the community curriculum need not be inward-looking nor inhibiting. Instead of a concentration upon the teaching of mechanical skills of Mathematics and English it would, without denying the necessity for learning such skills, shift the emphasis ... to an explicit recognition of the social role of the school in enabling children to live fully rather than conditioning them to be conforming acceptors of what is provided for them."⁶

He points out that the community curriculum does not under-rate the importance of traditional skills but suggests a different route for their development. He argues that it is an additional objective for schooling.

Eric Midwinter, in stating that the underlying national theme of the E.P.A. Project is the community school, envisaged a national policy on the subject. He acknowledges the many definitions of a community school but writes,

5 Poster, C. The School and the Community. Macmillan, 1971.

6 Rennie, J. The Coventry Community Education Project, Ideas No. 32, p. 71. .976.

"... most of them tend towards an 'open' as opposed to a 'closed' school, with more intensive usage of plant by the community in the evenings and during holidays and usually some pattern of parental participation in school life."⁷

He is very conscious of the need for the community school to be more than an instrument of harmony between school and community.

"Pouring in palliatives in the form of resources or services from outside is not sufficient; indeed, without the active and vital participation of the local inhabitants such interventionist policies lost much of their point."⁸

He continues,

"A natural aim for the community school might be the education of children to be the next generation of parents, voters and citizens in the neighbourhood, in the hope that they will conceive of creative responses to the pressing needs of the downtown and other disadvantaged districts."⁹

Midwinter realises that a number of his proposals which include greater use of the local area as a resource in teaching, and a change of role on the part of the teacher to that of one of "guide in the art of choice and taste, less of mentor in prejudged standards and valuations"¹⁰, will create some difficulties in the minds of the teaching profession.

He argues strongly the case for the community orientated curriculum and he points the way to three advantages.

7 Midwinter, E. Projections and Educational Priority Area at Work, Curriculum and the E.P.A. Community School. 1972.

8 Ibid.

9 Ibid.

10 Ibid.

1. Children should do well because the exercise of their reading and writing will be geared to their experience.
2. The child may gain confidence in the realisation that education is about him and his environment.
3. Parental involvement and support for the curriculum of the school would remove much of the mystery at present surrounding these institutions.

Midwinter indicates that an important aim of the community school must be the understanding of the educational aims and objectives of the school by the parent and an understanding of the social background of the pupils on the part of the teacher. Both parent and teacher acknowledge the need to strengthen communication and he feels that this may be best achieved by involving parents in the educational process. Midwinter feels that more extensive use of the educational plant for communal purposes is a step in the right direction but again warns that easier access to teachers and the greater use of the building is not enough, and a wholesale reappraisal of the curriculum is needed. He feels sure that the community-based curriculum will succeed in improving communications between home and school and increase parental support.

A major force influencing community education in the United Kingdom has been community development. In 1969 the Home Secretary announced the launching of the Community Development Project as a "neighbourhood-based experiment finding new ways of meeting the needs of people living in areas of high social deprivation". The educational implication of the need to develop the community's sense of awareness and the social skills of its members was acknowledged

in Coventry. In one of its first four community development projects, a Community Education Advisor was appointed to work closely with the already existing Community Development Project.

His objectives were:

1. To help disadvantaged people find ways of meeting their needs and aspirations;
2. To help people exercise increased control over their own lives;
3. To help enlarge the opportunities of disadvantaged people in directions which they themselves see as desirable;
4. To increase the capacity of the education service to respond by providing help which is more acceptable, intelligible and lasting in its effects.

Within Community Development Projects, three types of educational work have resulted:

1. Conventional educational development where the project has called for the improvement of existing facilities on the assumption that the education system can be effective but needs more resources.
2. Community education in which the Project concentrates on improving home/school links, developing a relevant curriculum, and a community school in order to create "constructive discontent" through the community school.
3. Emphasis is on work outside schools, on informal adult education, dealing with real life situations like

unemployment and rents. The object is to stimulate knowledge and awareness and encourage pressure for change among those directly affected.¹¹

Acknowledgement of the importance of the role of the school in underprivileged communities as an agent of social change is made by John Barron Mays in "Education and the Urban Child". Evidence gained from "The Crown Street Survey" indicated that part of the role of the school should be to influence behaviour and raise standards of life. He states that by a commitment to social welfare, schools will make their educational functions more effective and rewarding. Mays was concerned about the need to use the general culture of the neighbourhood as an ally rather than a force working against the efforts of the school. He states:

"Schools will be, then, the focal points in the local community or neighbourhood where all endeavours to effect social change will be concentrated."¹²

Mays points out that if the school is to serve the local community it will need a great deal of help and encouragement from the education authority to do this effectively. Part of their function will be to assist adults of the locality to tackle their own social problems; backwardness, absenteeism, truancy, delinquency, aimlessness, the misuse of leisure time, preparation for parenthood, the disciplining of children are obvious areas in which they will strive to exert an influence and to achieve changes. Mays advocates the need for the creation of formal associations between parents and teachers but also suggests the need to find more positive ways of achieving co-operation.

11 Paper submitted to the Home Office: Interim Report on Community Education in Coventry. 1971.

12 Mays, J.B. Education and the Urban Child. Social Research Series, Liverpool University Press, 1968.

The considerable political interest in the rights of parents at the present time highlights the need for more attention and resources to be channelled towards the improvement of home-school relations. It is important that some redefinition of the rights and responsibilities of parents be expressed, bearing in mind the need to avoid the assumption that either party can dictate terms. What is required is an organisation where parents and teachers can come into closer contact and through this build up an understanding that would lead to a co-operative partnership. The E.P.A. studies have underlined the growing acceptance by teachers that the home is at least as important as the school in the education of children.

James Lynch and John Pimlott write,

"We would, however, state quite categorically that it is our belief that it is possible to improve home-school relations by adopting a variety of new methods and techniques to bring the educational aims of the school and the social values of working-class families into closer harmony."¹³

It was suggested by the researchers that the attitude of parents to schools and what they are trying to achieve is at least as important as the social status of parents in influencing how pupils respond in school. They further emphasise that though social change may be minimal, the attitude of parents can be influenced through involvement and discussion.

The project set out four major objectives:

"Firstly we would seek to foster a critical awareness in teachers and parents of the importance of the home environment in successful child education and to increase their sensitivity to interdependence of the school, the home and the social service.

¹³ Lynch, J. and Pimlott, J. Schools Council Research Studies: Parents and Teachers. 1976.

Secondly, we would attempt to clarify for parents the values and objectives of formal education and to encourage them to develop an active interest in how, what and why their children were taught, and the importance of the home environment.

Thirdly, the project would seek to foster a wider community interest in educational values and objectives and to assist the school to play an active and vigorous role in the life and development of the community.

Fourthly, the project sought to provide teachers and parents with information, instruction and guidance, which would grow into a spirit of self-help, in order that enlightened parent-teacher involvement and a more community centred role for the school should be able to continue after the research team has withdrawn."¹⁴

It was hoped that the research project would help the participants,

"... to develop and increase an understanding of the role of the home in the child's learning and to encourage parent-teacher understanding and communication. In addition they would try to make explicit the different value systems of a pluralist society and to foster an interest in community involvement in education."¹⁵

These objectives would readily apply to action research in a community school, to show its social context, the educational importance of home and parental influences and to find out whether close co-operation with teachers and schools could improve the life-chances of children.

In the mid 1960s the Plowden Report indicated positive discrimination with regard to equality of opportunity through social and educational deprivation. Lynch and Pimlott suggest that the "Headstart Programme" of the U.S.A. and the "Educational Priority Area Programme" in this country were somewhat disappointing in their results. What has been realised, however, is that the influence and

14 Lynch, J. and Pimlott, J. op. cit.

15 Ibid.

importance of such background features as living conditions and parental attitudes is vitally important in the development of children and their ability fully to profit from the learning situations organised in the school.

An important aspect of the Schools Council Research Project "Parents and Teachers" is its support for action research into the nature of parent-teacher relationships. It points out the dangers of an assumption of the development of improved communications between parents and teachers merely through the establishment of community schools. It is emphasised that the community school organisation is only the vehicle for the much more sophisticated parent-teacher relationships which need to be developed. "The concept of the community school is well on the way to becoming one of the major educational bandwagons of our age."¹⁶

This comment from the report indicates some scepticism on behalf of the writers to the overall effectiveness of such organisations. They highlight the cautious response of teachers when the question of greater community involvement in education was raised. Significant is the suggestion that the former cosy acceptance of each other's role by the parent and the teacher is changing and that there is a need for the re-negotiation of the contractual relationship between parents and the professional, political, lay and administrative people at present in control of our schools. The report indicates a need on the part of teachers as well as parents to understand the redefinition of objectives required if the community school is to be established. There is a

¹⁶ Lynch, J. and Pimlott, J. op. cit.

suggestion that "the Community School is no more than an ideal at the moment, which on the basis of our experience neither the majority of teachers nor the majority of parents understands". Worth noting was the finding that although most experienced teachers fully appreciated the vital role played by the home in child education, they did not fully recognise the very important part they themselves can play in determining the attitude of parents to the education of their children. Their cautious approach to further developments in home-school relations is perhaps understandable in that society is already expecting them to play an increased social role. Yet in order to create a greater understanding of each other's role in the education of children, closer contact is essential, as the research also indicated, parents tended to under value the importance of the home, in the child's education. Few parents believed that their attitude to schools and teachers played a decisive role in their child's education.

Very interesting is the claim made by the authors of the report that "parent discussion groups are probably the only really satisfactory way of introducing to parents some of the more controversial proposals to improve home-school relations, such as parent attendance in classes, home visiting by a member of the school staff and eventually the community school"¹⁷. They point out the dangers of using the questionnaire and interview method on parents who are not fully informed about the issues involved. They discovered that opinions often changed considerably about ways of improving home-school relations after the proposition had been fully explained. They maintained that where a

17 Lynch, J. and Pimlott, J. op. cit.

co-operative team of teachers, support agencies and parent discussion groups exist, a long term impact on parent-teacher relationships may be made; children may be better supported socially and emotionally and greater use made of voluntary parent assistance.

Lynch and Pimlott view with some caution the community-based curriculum. They furthermore state that the concept of the community school is little understood by parents or teachers:

"Indeed we have sometimes wondered whether any consensus about the community school exists amongst those professional educationists who so enthusiastically support its development. Before bewildering parents with this somewhat ill-defined (if socially imaginative) proposal, a great deal more solid groundwork needs to be laid down in the form of helping parents to become involved with their child's school at what may appear to be more prosaic levels."¹⁸

These are cautionary words at a time when the community school is a subject of much debate. The Southampton Study, in line with findings of the pilot survey of parents at Hedworthfield and the Boldon Survey, indicated that the majority of parents were satisfied with the way schools were organised and controlled. Only a small number of parents indicated a strong desire to be involved in the management and government of schools. However, their findings did indicate that many parents would welcome more information, consultation and involvement in their child's education than was at present available.

(iii) The Role of the Parent

The importance of the parental contribution to a child's education, whether in school or out of it, is recognised by many

¹⁸ Lynch, J. and Pimlott, J. op. cit.

educationalists and teachers are coming to regard the relationship with parents as that of a partnership. Arising out of this comes an apparent need for parents to become more involved in the education of their children.

The 1944 Education Act stated that each maintained school should have a board of Governors or Managers. The instrument of management or government was left to the discretion of the Local Education Authority within certain limits. The responsibilities of governors covered such issues as the appointment and dismissal of teachers, admission of pupils, internal organisation and curriculum, finance, upkeep of premises and the fixing of certain school holidays. A number of shortcomings were discovered in the differing practices with regard to the setting up, composition and functions of managers and governors in L.E.As. Their composition was not always open to parents and other members of the community. Although they were usually involved in the appointment of staff, they had little involvement with the general direction of the conduct and curriculum of the school and only slight involvement in financial matters. The Managing and Governing Bodies found they had no indispensable role to perform, as the executive function was carried out by the L.E.A.

Local Government re-organisation in 1974 highlighted differences between L.E.As. As the L.E.As become larger, a demand was created for more local involvement. Secondary school re-organisation on comprehensive lines had stimulated interest in what was happening in schools.

Demands were made that if Managers and Governors are to exist then they should be given more responsibility. Together with this

was a demand that schools should be more accountable. The Taylor Committee, set up by Mr. Reg Prentice in February 1975, was the first review of the role of Governors and Managers since the 1944 Act. The terms of reference were, "to review the arrangements for the management and government of maintained Primary and Secondary schools in England and Wales, including the composition and functions of bodies of Managers and Governors and their relationship with Local Education Authorities and Head Teachers and Staffs of schools, with parents of pupils and with the local community at large; and to make recommendations".

The Report entitled "A New Partnership For Our Schools" was published in 1977. It acknowledged the need to give parents a say in school matters. The Report proposed that membership of the new governing bodies should be in four equal parts comprising Local Authority representatives, school staff, parents and representatives of the local community. Parent Governors were regarded as an important means of developing a closer relationship between home and school. Only parents of pupils currently attending school were to be considered and parents should choose their own representatives. Members of the wider community could be nominated; these may be from community associations, industry, further education or organisations like trade unions. The importance of communication and co-operation within the school, the school's relations with the parents and the community as a whole was stressed. The report considered how best parents could contribute to the work of the Governing Body. It recommended the setting up of Parents' Organisations of various types, accommodation to be provided for regular meetings and regular

reports of pupils' progress and school organisation to be made available. It was emphasised that an important aspect of the work of the Governors should be to develop links between the school, parents and the community within which the school exists.

Curriculum organisation and content was one of the most sensitive issues considered by the Committee and one which Head Teachers and staff feel is their responsibility as the professionals. Evidence submitted to the Committee lacked complete agreement as to Governors' involvement in this aspect of the school organisation. Some felt Governors should be completely excluded and others that they should help in the formation of the schools' curriculum. Although parents' organisations suggested that Governors should have a say in drawing up the general educational aims of the school and should have more opportunity to question teachers on specific matters, it is suggested that this is a view which may not be shared by a majority of parents. The Committee argued that curriculum should not be the sole responsibility of teachers; it is not just instruction in specific subjects areas but has wider implications. Schools are financed by society to achieve certain objectives which society regards as desirable. It is important therefore that schools should have the full support of the community.

The Report's recommendations, although not receiving the complete approval of parents and professionals, certainly indicate the increasing demands by parents to be involved in the education of their children. It may be suggested that at a time when there seems to be a lack of confidence in the educational system, public support is needed. Indeed the strong feeling that schools should actively

foster communications with parents promoted the Department of Education and Science to issue Circular 15/77, Information for Parents. In this Circular acknowledgement was made of the present arrangements made by schools to inform parents about their organisation and staffs through visits, open days and a wide variety of formal and informal contacts. However, the Secretary of State felt that information in a written form should be provided for parents about the schools their children attend. She further indicated the nature and extent of the information which should normally be available in a written form. She states her hope "that Authorities will keep under continual review their arrangements for supplying information to parents about all stages of the educational process, and that parents will respond by co-operating in every way they can". She believes that this will contribute greatly to the forging of closer links between home and school and will have "beneficial results for parents, teachers and pupils".

Douglas Hamblin writes:

"Links with parents are critical for maintaining effort and raising pupils' standard of performance especially in the first three or possibly four years of the secondary stage. It must be accepted, however, that parents are becoming increasingly critical of educational practices, though some still expect the school to produce results for their children without any effort or co-operation from them. As a profession we must build good relations which will help the neighbourhood form its image of the school. Without this, parents are only too ready to allocate a school a poor reputation. We must, therefore, be prepared to invest time in helping parents to understand new methods and explaining our objectives."¹

1 Hamblin, D. The Teacher and Pastoral Care. Blackwell, Oxford, 1978.

In his book, "The Teacher and Pastoral Care", he points out some of the difficulties which may exist in parent-teacher relationships. For one thing, pupils after 4th year often have some reservations about parent-teacher contacts; they are seen as a threat to their autonomy. On occasion there is mutual suspicion between parents and teachers and visits which do take place sometimes increase this distrust.

As shown in Enquiry 1 (1968), parental contact with the school may bring a clash of values. The report showed that parents and their children stress different aspects of the teachers' role and the function of the school from those stressed by teachers. Hamblin indicates that links with parents from apathetic backgrounds are essential but he emphasises that they are even more so with parents from supportive backgrounds. The latter are concerned about their children's achievement but have limited views of the nature of education and lack an appreciation of the need to prepare their children for a rapidly changing world through new teaching methods. "Their emphasis on progress produces mark-hungry children"².

We know that many other factors besides intelligence play a part in achievement in school. A pupil often chooses to work or not work through the influence of others. Parental attitudes may play a significant part in deciding how a pupil may approach curricular activities.

Banks and Finlayson (1973) discovered, in groups of able pupils whom they studied, that the mode of discipline at home was

2 Hamblin, D. op. cit.

strongly related to success or lack of it. Material punishments were associated with lack of success, as these parental attitudes fail to provide the pupil with the necessary supports when he or she meets difficulties. Although there is no straightforward relationship between paternal approval and final achievements it was discovered that pupils who were subject to psychological rather than physical discipline seemed to cope better.

There is a need for the school and the parent to discuss and understand these subtle aspects of success and failure.

Although parent-teacher associations are well established, it is often questionable whether the best use is made of these organisations. Parents appreciate real contact with teachers but if the opportunity is not provided for such a contact they may accept that it is unobtainable: "if parents are unaware of the benefits of teacher-contact, they are hardly likely to feel a need for it. Provision of the facilities and education of the potential recipients create the need"³.

Hamblin suggests the setting up of a working party of parents and teachers to discuss ways of linking home and school, with parents involved in concrete activities. First hand experience of new teaching methods should be provided for parents to gain understanding and support. He emphasises that a well planned parent organisation may be a ginger group modifying perception of the school in the neighbourhood and pulling in other parents.

3 Hamblin, D. op. cit.

"The full use of parents as resources in a joint endeavour necessitates providing them with meaningful tasks which orientate them to the neighbourhood and to other groups of parents apart from directing their attention to events within the school. This can only be achieved gradually. It is hoped that active parental contacts rather than passive acceptance of views will help to solve some of our current difficulties."⁴

⁴ Hamblin, D. op. cit.

I. W. YOUNG

VOLUME II

Chapter 5

CHAPTER 5

PARENTAL CONTACT THROUGH SHARED FACILITIES -
Does this significantly benefit child or school?

(i) Pilot Study at Hedworthfield Comprehensive School, South
Tyneside

The purpose of the investigation is to examine the effect a shared use scheme may have upon parental contact with the school. It was decided that the use of a self-completion questionnaire was the most suitable means of obtaining information.

The questionnaire was structured into two parts. The first part refers to parents' visits concerned with school matters and enquiries into their opinions of the school's arrangements for such visits.

The second part of the questionnaire investigates parents' opinions of the philosophy of the community use of the school and the extent to which they participate in such use.

The questionnaires were distributed to the pupils who were asked to convey them to their parents and return them during the following week. These questionnaires were confidential and anonymous. Details of the organisation of the survey are described as an introduction to the findings of the investigation.

The work of Professor Claus A. Moser and the American, Pauline V. Young on the subject of how to conduct a social survey has been closely followed in planning the investigation.

Moser points out that a valuable method in sociological investigation is simple observation - "not asking what they do, but rather watching how they do it"¹. He concludes that such a method helps a researcher to gauge the true feeling of a neighbourhood, especially when it is matched against the numerical data of the schedule and the questionnaire. The most valuable sociological information is, he says, "often obtained in casual talks on an absolutely equal footing and through friendly intercourse". Young's advice is that in surveys of this nature, the necessary data should be obtained "without harrassment and without embarrassment"².

Moser also strongly recommends a pilot survey before the main work of a survey is embarked upon and this study has attempted to follow this requirement by means of a questionnaire, interviews and observations carried out in the summer and autumn of 1977. A questionnaire was distributed to most of the parents of the pupils of Hedworthfield Comprehensive School in the late autumn of 1977. Some difficulty was experienced owing to normal absenteeism during the week of distribution. A non-return rate of 22% was encountered, some of which may be attributed to forgetfulness on the part of the pupils to deliver or return schedules, forgetfulness on the part of the parent to complete the questionnaire or even apathy and lack of interest. To avoid 'harrassment' little pressure was put upon pupils to return these, other than a few reminders. No evidence was

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- 1 Moser, C.A. Survey Methods in Social Investigation. Heinemann, 1958.
 - 2 Young, P.V. Scientific Social Surveys and Research. Prentice Hall, 1966.

forthcoming of any animosity on the part of parents to the request for the information required. In this first questionnaire the aim of the author was to gain a crisp, simple response and in the main this was obtained. In the following description of the pilot study it will be noted that there are certain gaps in the information required and that some ambiguity in the format of the questions necessitated that changes be made for the collection of data in the main study.

The 'shared facilities' scheme at Hedworthfield was started in 1971 by way of an experiment following a petition by local residents about the lack of social and recreational facilities in the area. It was envisaged that the long term objective would be the provision of a "Community College" with social facilities for youth and adults.

Experience showed that the neighbourhood school could develop into an integral part of the community and be the natural centre for all educational, vocational and recreational activities. Not only could the scheme be justified in economic terms by the desirability of making expensive plant and equipment available to the whole community but of vital importance was the concept of continuing influence for personal development with youngsters in their teens. *Investigations have shown that where parents have had regular contact with the school, a positive effect has been experienced in their youngsters' progress. It has also been shown

* Douglas, J.W.B. The Home and the School. MacGibbon and Kee, 1964.

Mays, J.B. Education and the Urban Child. Liverpool University Press, 1962.

Jackson, B. and Marsden, D. Education and the Working Class Child. Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966.

Wiseman, S. Education and Environment. Manchester University Press, 1964.

in these surveys that where parents are involved in the extra-curricular activities of the school and believe in its ability to have a positive effect upon their youngsters' vocational prospects, there is a greater achievement on the part of the pupil.

The management of the 'shared facilities' scheme at Hedworthfield lies with the Headmaster and he is assisted by the Further Education Youth and Community Tutor. Working in partnership with the Headmaster is the Hedworthfield Association Management Committee which is elected annually as follows:-

Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Treasurer and up to twelve members. In addition each section nominates two representatives and the Local Authority nominates three members. Co-options are also permitted and the Head Teachers of both the Hedworthfield Junior School and Fellgate Junior School serve in this capacity. Two teachers are nominated by the staff of the school. At present the staff involved in the running of the Youth and Community functions include the Headmaster, the Further Education Youth and Community Tutor, an unqualified Assistant provided for one year by the Job Creation Scheme, eight paid part-time Youth Leaders and twelve Instructors for Further Education and Youth Activity classes. There are a number of volunteers assisting with Youth Clubs, Uniformed Organisations and Youth Activity classes.

The pressure on accommodation at the Secondary School is such that the Association's activities have had to be extended to the Hedworth and Fellgate Junior Schools.

Plans for future development include a social area, provided under an urban aid programme, to provide a coffee bar/lounge. The Borough Council has approved the provision of a purpose-built community centre and the extensions to the school due to begin in March 1978 are designed with community use very much in mind.

At Hedworthfield in 1980, youth clubs for all ages run alongside Men's Club, Ladies' Club, Baby Clinic, Tea Club, Senior Citizens' Groups, Church Groups, Cubs, Scouts, Army Cadets and Duke of Edinburgh Award Groups.

Further Education classes exist with self-programming groups who participate in Soccer training, Table Tennis, Carpet Bowls and Ballroom Dancing.

The scheme needed to expand its premises owing to a demand for more activities, and began using two Junior Schools close by for Yoga, Children's Dancing, Brownie and Girl Guide Groups and Mini Youth Clubs.

At present there is an adult membership of 344, a junior membership of 830 and 42 senior citizens which makes up a total membership of 1,216. The average monthly attendances for 1979 were: adults 480 and juniors 1,251, with an average total monthly attendance of 1,607. Total yearly attendance based upon a ten month period would be calculated at 16,070. This year (1980) weekly attendances are averaging 605, which is 49.8% of the total membership.

The Approach to the Pilot Survey

An attempt was made to obtain as near to a 100% return as was possible, opposed to a random sample following strict sociological practice, for it was realised that the only true alternative to a scientifically accurate random sample is a full census, since a haphazard sample degenerates into useless guesswork. In accordance with this aim all pupils in school that week were issued with questionnaires to be completed by parents. Some inadequacies of this method became apparent: a more careful record should have been kept of the number of questionnaires issued for data purposes, because there is obviously a disparity between the number of the pupils in the school and the number of parents with children in the school. Although this was taken into account, insufficient attention was paid to the issuing and return of the questionnaires. In the same way, some absentees who returned before the end of the week received a questionnaire, whilst others did not. Again insufficient record of this was kept.

Of approximately 285 questionnaires issued, 222 were returned. These 222 represented 335 pupils in the school and a 78% return of the questionnaires, a copy of which is appended.

Parents' Contact with the School

In the report by Dr. J.M. Bynner, "Parents' Attitude to Education", he states: "Parents who maintain close contact with the school are in a strong position to give their children educational support. Similarly, those schools that take pains to keep parents informed about their child's progress may help them to give the

child this support"³. In the questionnaire distributed to the parents of pupils at Hedworthfield questions were asked about these two aspects of school-parent communication. Table 1 indicates that almost 76% of the parents had contact with the school concerning their child's educational progress, with 'open days' and 'prize-giving days' topping the list. It will be noted in Table 2 that most of the functions organised by the school were well attended. Sports days had a reduced attendance as did careers meetings which related only to the parents of the present fourth and fifth years. Almost 51% of the parents had attended jumble sales and bazaars, which seems to reflect the social priorities of the parents.

Table 3 indicates that only 24% of the parents had visited the school for reasons concerned with attendance, misbehaviour and complaints and less than 4% had three or more visits to the school for these reasons.

Considering the very favourable response in support of community use of the school the figures in Tables 4 and 5 may appear surprising, with a little over 41% of the parents visiting the school for community use. These visits were mainly of a social nature: dances, 'bus trips, theatre visits and leisure-based evening classes. This was reflected in the response to question B.8, Table 6, which indicated that 57% of the parents felt that organising social activities and money-raising activities should be the main job of a community association. A wider community awareness was indicated by over 46% of the parents who indicated that the community association should work for the welfare of the neighbourhood, yet only 50 parents felt the community association should have a say in the running of the school.

3 Bynner, J.M. Parents' Attitudes to Education. H.M.S.O., 1972.

TABLE 1

Parents' visits to the school for educational reasons

		%
Have not visited	53	24
One visit	39	17
Two visits	28	13
Three or more visits	102	46

TABLE 2

Parental participation in school functions at Hedworthfield

		%
Open Evenings	132	59
Prize Giving	98	44
Sports Days	73	33
School Plays, Concerts, etc.	85	38
Careers Meetings	67	30
Jumble Sales, Bazaars	112	50
None	34	15

TABLE 3

Parents' visits to school for behavioural reasons and complaints

		%
Have not visited	169	76
One visit	35	16
Two visits	10	5
Three or more visits	8	3

TABLE 4

Parents' visits for community reasons

		%
Have not visited	130	58
One visit	10	5
Two visits	9	4
Three or more visits	73	33

TABLE 5

Parental participation in community functions at Hedworthfield

		%
Social Evenings, Dances	25	11
Outings, 'Bus Trips, Theatre Visits	23	10
Sporting activities	7	3
Evening Classes/Leisure	27	17
Evening Classes/Education	7	3
None	136	61

TABLE 6

Do you think a Community Association should:-

		%
Organise recreational activities	125	56
Work for services in the neighbourhood	103	46
Organise money-raising efforts for the school	127	57
Have a say in the running of the school	50	22

TABLE 7

Parents' view of arrangements to see the Head or Teachers

		%
Completely happy	208	94
Not happy	8	4
No response	6	2

TABLE 8

Parents' responses to contacts with the school

How does the school deal with the following:-

(a) Giving information about child's progress

		%
Very well	104	47
Well	42	19
Quite well	41	18
Not well enough	13	6
No response	22	10

(b) Welcoming parent without an appointment

		%
Very well	124	56
Well	28	13
Quite well	28	13
Not well enough	0	0
No response	42	18

(c) Allowing access to a particular teacher

		%
Very well	105	47
Well	33	15
Quite well	27	12
Not well enough	5	2
No response	52	24

(d) Passing important information to the school

		%
Very well	118	53
Well	29	14
Quite well	23	10
Not well enough	3	1
No response	49	22

TABLE 9

Parents' responses to use of school for community activities

		%
Agree	216	97
Disagree	3	1.5
No response	3	1.5

TABLE 10

Do you consider that the community use of the school:-

		%
Benefits your child	168	75
Makes no difference	42	20
Your child is worse off	2	1
No response	10	4

TABLE 11

Parents' responses to school visits

		%
A waste of time	1	1
Better understanding	25	11
Much better understanding	26	11
Well worth taking the trouble to go	148	67
Not completed	22	10

Communications between School and Parent

Table 7 indicates that of the 22% of parents who returned the questionnaire, 20% were completely happy with the present arrangements to see the Head or teachers and only 8 indicated that they were not happy. Further consideration given to the construction of this question suggests that a four point scale would have given parents some degree of choice and provided a more balanced response as shown in the subsequent requests for information. Of the eight returns indicating dissatisfaction with the present arrangements, two indicated an administrative error within the report system of the school:

"I have asked to see the teacher on the report receipt chit on two occasions and I have not received an appointment. I suggest the receipts be checked on return".

"It seems difficult to get to the Headmaster or teachers when needed".

Another administrative error came to light regarding absence of a pupil:

"I was not informed about the open night to check my child's progress because she was away from school at the time".

It was noteworthy that dissatisfaction was often based on one incident:

"I think that the Headmaster should be present when there is a difference of opinion".

Given the option of the four point scale, Table 8(a) shows that parents indicated more clearly their degree of satisfaction after visiting the school. The rating of these responses indicates some measure of success in parent-school relationships.

In the responses which examined more closely communications between home and school, a greater degree of criticism appeared. Although 104 parents thought the school kept them well informed of their child's progress, 13 indicated that they were not well informed, 41 were fairly satisfied and 42 well satisfied. Table 8(b) indicates a similar pattern emerging for each of the four enquiries. It is noteworthy that 20 to 40 parents did not complete this section of the questionnaire. An examination of the returns indicates that many of these were returns from first year parents who had yet to visit the school for the reasons indicated. Access to staff received a slightly less favourable rating with the parents in Table 8(c). Access to pass on information in Table 8(d) received a favourable rating but a large number did not complete this section. This may once again be attributed to response from first year parents but also to parents who have not felt the need to approach the school for this reason.

To summarise, it would appear that most of the parents were satisfied with the arrangements at the school for seeing the Head and other teachers, a small proportion expressed some dissatisfaction, those who were dissatisfied criticised the arrangements for 'open days' stating that too little time was available to talk to the teachers when they were held, several were concerned with the lack of direct access to a teacher when visiting the school with a complaint.

Nearly all the parents indicated they were happy with the present report system and again a few were concerned that they were not given access to a member of staff when they requested an interview on the return slip.

Table 9 concerns the views of parents on the community use of the school.

Only two of the parents who responded to the questionnaire disagreed with the use of the school for activities other than teaching. The parent of a first year boy stated:

"I feel it would make no difference to my son's education because it doesn't affect his lessons or his general outlook or his own leisure pursuits".

More significant than the apparent almost blanket approval of the use of the school for community use was the response to the open ended part of question B.3 concerned with the expression of parents' views about community use of the school. Table 10 indicates that the great majority of the parents who returned the questionnaire believed that the opening of the school to the community benefited their child. It is significant, however, that a number of parents, though supporting the use of the school by the community, felt that it had little influence upon their child.

The open ended question was completed by 90% of the parents and covered many of the aspects of community use of schools which are being currently debated. The responses indicating benefit may broadly be categorised into areas related to school and community, social education, family support and economic factors.

Leaving the responses of those who felt community use of the school was of benefit to their child to one side for the moment, it has been noted that a significant number of parents (20%) indicated that they felt the opening of the school to the community did not benefit their child. Although a number of parents who ticked this part of question B.3 did not give a reason for their choice, many who did gave a narrow interpretation to the word "benefit" or appeared to ignore it. Several comments were very basic in that they expressed non-attendance as the lack of benefit.

"I can't see what difference it makes as my children don't go to school after hours, or me".

Some misinterpretation was shown in the responses:

"Out of all the above activities my son would only be eligible for the Scouts and as he is already in a troop the above seems immaterial".

"My son is too young to take part in the above activities".

"Because these activities take place after school time".

Other comments gave an objective view point:

"I think it is a good idea but for my children it doesn't make any difference. They do not like any out of school activities".

"I feel that the school should be used for the benefit of the whole community although at present it doesn't affect my child as he is only eleven years old".

Several responses gave strong community support yet did not relate this to "benefit" their child:

"I am especially interested in the senior citizens' clubs, dance socials, etc."

"Because it helps the community by getting to know each other thus making it a very friendly community".

Although a number of the responses to this question contain a reasoned statement by the parent regarding lack of benefit to their child, a large number of statements, to be examined later, gave many well-balanced arguments opening benefit to the child through community use of school. However, there is enough evidence to suggest a need to improve the wording of question B.3. Some elaboration is needed, i.e. What kind of benefit? It is important to note that although 20% of responses indicated no benefit to the child, many of these contained favourable comments regarding community use of school.

As previously stated, favourable comments could be categorised into four broad areas of related benefit, two of which were concerned with the fundamental needs of the neighbourhood and two expressing the deeper philosophical concepts associated with community use of schools.

To many parents the benefit of shared use manifested itself very basically in the form of parental support with the common theme recurring:

"Keeps children off the streets at night".

"Benefits my children because it keeps them happy and out of trouble".

"They have somewhere to go at night time and you know what they are doing".

A number of parents began their response with the concept of community use identified above but then elaborated their concept of benefit to include other factors:

"I think using the school for other activities is a good thing. There is no form of entertainment in this area, also old age pensioners and children are not able to travel and use 'buses in the dark nights".

"It is very important for activities to be provided for children during their spare leisure hours".

The responses concerned with the economic use of expensive school plant were encouraging in that they displayed a wide knowledge among parents of the existing community use of the building.

"As there is no community centre on the estate the school provides an excellent community service".

"The more the school is used for community activities the less chance of vandalism at the school".

"It is better to use the school for the benefit of the public than it standing empty and the children having nowhere to go and no interests".

A very large number of parents displayed a sympathy and understanding of the benefit to be derived from community use other than the more physical aspects of the wider use of school plant. They displayed a somewhat surprising understanding of aspects of social

education and the benefits to be derived from promoting strong links between the school and the community. The responses of a pure social nature were primarily concerned with relationships:

"It gives the children a chance to mix with adults".

"I think the opening of the school to the community makes a child more aware of what goes on and also broadens their outlook on life".

"I think the activities listed are good for the morale of everybody; it gets people to meet people".

"Harmonious involvement benefits everyone".

Aspects of social education promoted by the strengthening of links between the home and school together with an appreciation of the service the school may give to the wider community were shown in the parents' comments:

"It is good that parents should have an interest in the school activities as well as the child as it helps both with their interests".

"Opening the school for extra activities benefits the child to a large extent if he or she is directly involved. Where adult activities only were concerned benefit to the child will naturally be confined to a familiarity between parents and teachers who are involved in these activities. In both cases definitely beneficial".

"I think all these activities in school should broaden the child's mind and could give him or her a sense of

responsibility if he's encouraged to join in".

"I feel that using the school for club activities, for instance, helps children in that they meet new friends as well as old friends. Gives them an interest other than roaming the street. It brings them out of themselves, broadens their outlook. The same applies to parents also who attend activities. It gives them interests other than just plain homework".

"Creates varied interests. Anything that encourages people to work together in their leisure time can only be beneficial".

"Gives parents the opportunity to see teaching environment and facilities. Gives children the opportunity to participate in activities they would not otherwise be able to do, due to non-existent facilities in this area".

"Because it helps the child to bridge the gap between home and school so that they are not two separate parts of their lives".

"For my child comes away knowing more about the school and gets a better relationship with the teachers".

"I feel it helps to create a community spirit which is essential in any society".

"Neighbourhood has use of first class facilities outside of school hours thus helping all age groups. Keeps parents in contact with the school".

"Taking part in communal activities of their choice gives them an identity with the community and should lead to a fuller understanding of their responsibilities in and to the community coupled with its corresponding education at school. This should lead to a more mature adult, better able to comprehend the reason for all the rules and regulations necessary to running a stable society and country and willing to take part in the running of it".

"Gives children and parents opportunities to mix in leisure time and affords help in hobbies to both children and parents creating some esprit de corps".

"Promotes better relationships between school, parents and children, also a means of bringing neighbours and people together".

"It appears to bring a closer relationship between teachers, pupils and parents; by doing this it seems to bring more interest to the pupils and gets the better out of them".

"The school being used to its full capacity and the good work of the Community Association bringing forth a closer contact between community and education must surely only benefit the children".

"School will be more acceptable by the children as a place (an institution) to enjoy and not a 12 year prison sentence as I regarded it 35 to 25 years ago".

In giving their interpretation of the benefit derived by their children from community use of school, the parents have, by their favourable comments, shown an understanding of Hedworthfield as more than a school. Many also showed a perceptive understanding of what they would expect the aims and objectives of opening the school to the community to be. A number of the basic, physical advantages of opening the school to youth in the evenings readily showed themselves in the responses: "keep them off the streets", "a place to go at nights", "a change from T.V.", "away from trouble". A few responses specifically acknowledged the greater use of expensive school plant, although this was sometimes implicit in a number of responses which related to social benefit and improved relationships.

In the important area of relationships between teachers, pupils and community, parental comment indicates a large measure of support and understanding of what the school is attempting to achieve. In the responses mention was frequently made of the benefits derived from the mixing of young and old, children and adults and of community spirit and identity. Several references were made to parental involvement and interest, teacher-parent relationships and better understanding between parents, pupils and the school. Easy access to the school was mentioned associated with a greater understanding of the activities in the school and the need to bridge the gap between home and school. Of interest were the several references made to the changing image of the school; of pupils enjoying school with several direct references to the community use of school and its influence upon the motivation of pupils.

The questionnaires were carefully checked for analyses correlation. The total responses were subjected to a consistency test: questions A.1 - 3 were compared with the responses to B.4 and B.6. A strong correlation was discovered between the two groups of questions with a few examples of misunderstanding or incorrect recording. Only four parents ticked non-attendance for community activities then ticked attendance at socials, 'bus trips, evening classes. Three parents did not correlate their response A.1, visits to school for educational reasons, with B.4 which specified the nature of educational visits. Several parents of first year pupils did not associate the 'induction' meeting for parents of new pupils with being educational. Two questionnaires did not correlate the school dance with community activities and two parents indicated one visit to school in A.1 yet ticked attendance at all the activities listed in Section B.4. Where respondents had indicated that they had visited the school on three or more occasions for educational and community reasons in questions A.1 and A.3, they also ticked "It was well worth the trouble to go" of Table 11. These responses also correlated with question A.6 with "very well" highly scored. The expected high commitment to question B.4 and B.6, which specified the nature of the visits made was also evident.

General Observations

1. Predictably, parents with older pupils in the school had visited on several occasions.
2. Parental involvement in community activities was stronger from the immediate neighbourhood estates of Fellgate and

Hedworth. Many parents resident in the Calf Close Estate scored well with educational visits but low on community contacts.

3. A number of first year parents indicated that they had made several visits to the school for community reasons before their children attended.
4. A number of parents agreed with community use and indicated that they were happy with the methods of contact with the school yet they had not visited the school.
5. In several responses a strong school commitment was indicated through a high score for educational visits. These also showed support for community use but the respondents did not attend these activities.
6. A low rating was shown for visits concerned with truancy, attendance, behavioural problems or complaints. Many of these indicated support for the school although where a parent had a complaint it was usually an alleged mishandling of a situation by a member of staff.
7. The responses from the parents of second and third year pupils indicated the strongest correlation between school and community visits.
8. A high percentage of the questionnaires showed strong support for evening use of the buildings for youth activities.

9. No evidence was discovered of a community commitment associated with a negative school response.
10. Where a parent felt they had been obstructed from seeing a teacher over a complaint this became a major issue when they completed question A.4 and the third part of A.6.
11. Less than 20% of the respondents believed that the Community Association should have a say in the running of the school.
12. Some criticism was expressed of the reporting of pupils' progress in the school.
13. A fairly high standard of articulateness was shown by the parents, who made their meaning clear despite occasional inaccuracies in grammar and syntax.
14. Several respondents who indicated strong praise and support for community activities and school achievement gave a nil or low response to visits to the school.
15. Community connections with the school do not always overcome incidents of personal dissatisfaction.

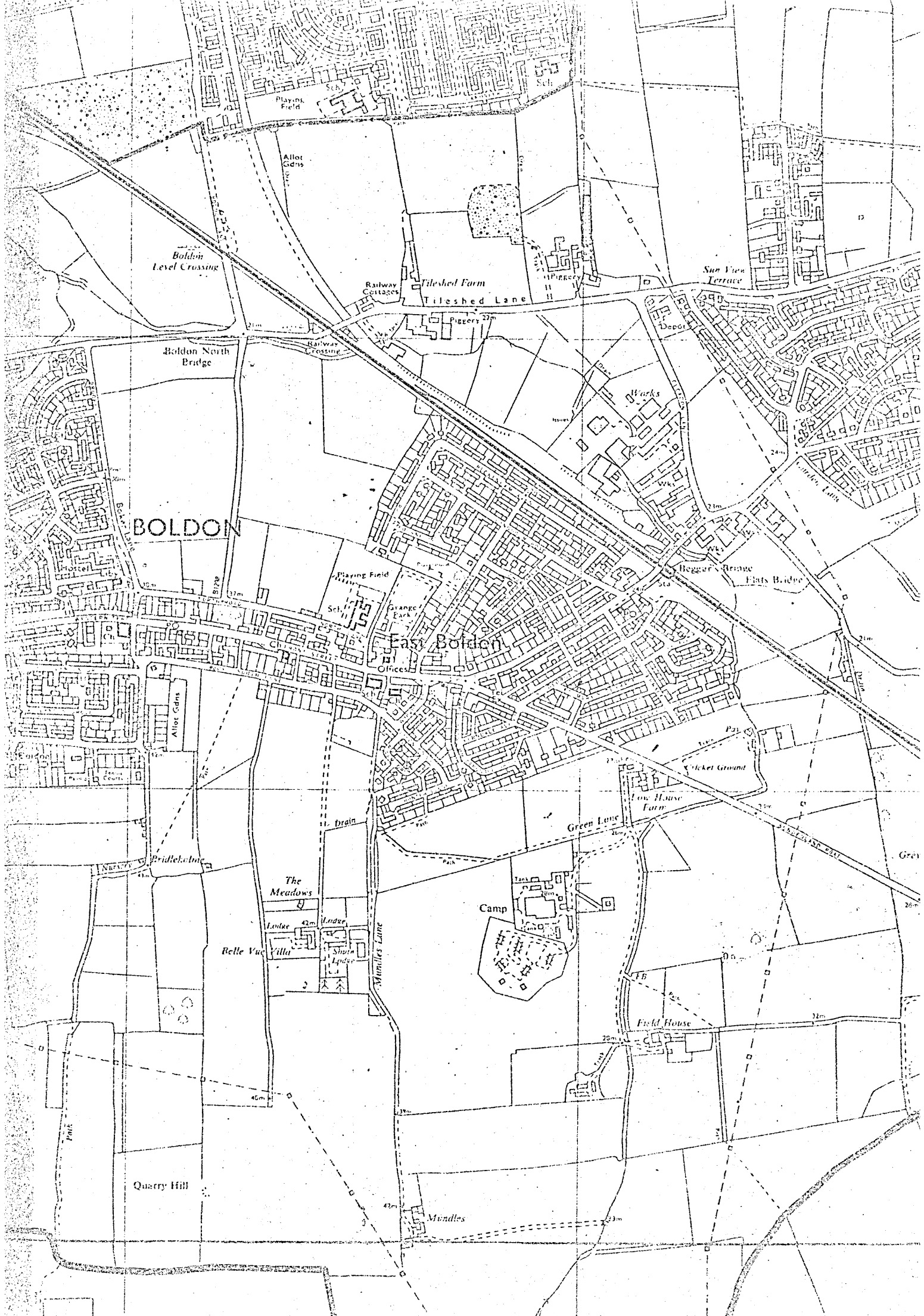
CHAPTER 6

A SURVEY OF THE 'SHARED FACILITIES' SCHEME AT
BOLDON COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL, SOUTH TYNESIDE

(i) Geographical background

The area served by Boldon Comprehensive School may be subdivided into areas as illustrated in Fig. 1, and are described below:

- (a) Boldon Colliery - this area is based on the old colliery settlement which grew up around the pit in the 19th Century. It consists largely of the old colliery cottages and older houses, built before 1919, although some recent housing development has been carried out in the western part of the settlement in the 1970s.
- (b) Boldon Newtown - this area includes a number of pre-1919 Tyneside flats which developed along with the colliery settlement, and also a number of improved inter-war Council houses.
- (c) East Boldon - this is a residential area comprising pre-war and post-war housing, for the most part owner-occupied, covering a wide range of types of dwelling from old terraced to small semi-detached and more luxurious 'executive' housing.





Between 1961-1976 the population in Boldon Newtown remained stable whilst the population in Boldon Colliery decreased by 31%. Although slum clearance accounts for a large proportion of the decrease, outward migration is a significant factor in the population loss.

The population structure at Boldon Colliery shows a higher proportion of old age pensioners and middle-aged people than the rest of South Tyneside.

Boldon Newtown has a high proportion of under 30s, which includes a high percentage of school children.

The population of East Boldon consists of a fairly balanced distribution of elderly retired people, middle-aged couples with grown up families and younger couples with growing families.

Boldon Colliery and Newtown have well above the South Tyneside average of skilled households, which, in turn, has a high proportion of the national average. Approximately 66% and 50% of households in Boldon Colliery and Newtown were skilled in 1976 compared with the Borough average of 44%, although this percentage was decreasing in Boldon Colliery and increasing in Boldon Newtown.

There is evidence of an increase in the elderly population of the community although in other areas of the Boldon community the fairly large school-age population indicates the need for community facilities for that age group.

The rate of unemployment for the community is running at more than twice the national average. This will soon be increased by the projected closure of the colliery (which will in no way affect the L.E.A./C.I.S.W.O. partnership).

Although concern was expressed by a number of respondents to the Boldon Survey about difficulties of transport, the area is fairly well served by 'bus services, both in terms of frequency and the number of destinations offered. Services are available to Newcastle, South Shields and Sunderland, and the distances which people have to walk to a 'bus stop are reasonable. It is acknowledged that this form of transport is no longer cheap.

The provision of adequate education and community facilities is vital to the well-being of an area. Apart from its educational use, Boldon Comprehensive School acts as a community centre, serving the needs of the whole community rather than just school children. The Boldon Community Centre based at Boldon Comprehensive School has 3,300 members. A wide range of activities and further education courses are available, while facilities provided include two squash courts, a lounge, an activity room and several general purpose rooms with a coffee bar and additional changing facilities to be provided.

(ii) Initial Planning

In 1967 the Durham Welfare Committee of the Coal Industry Social Welfare Organisation conducted a survey of the then Boldon Urban District to determine the extent of the need for sports/social/youth facilities in that area. The objects for which C.I.S.W.O. is established are:-

- (a) To promote and improve the health, social well-being and conditions of living of persons who are or have been employed in the coal industry of Great Britain

or in activities allied to those of the said coal industry, and their wives, husbands and dependant relatives, and the widows and necessitous relatives of deceased persons who were in their lifetime employed as aforesaid by initiating, furthering and supporting activities for the purposes aforesaid, and in particular, but without prejudice to other means of attaining those purposes, by

- (i) assisting the sick and disabled,
- (ii) providing facilities for education
(other than vocational training for
the coal industry),
- (iii) providing facilities for healthy
recreation with special, but not
exclusive, reference to the needs of
young persons,

and to carry out the foregoing objects in such a manner as to further the integration of workers in the coal industry in the communities in which they live.

- (b) For any of the above-mentioned purposes to co-operate with public authorities and with other bodies of persons responsible for or concerned with the promotion of health, social welfare or education and the provision of facilities for healthy recreation and to engage in joint activities with and seek for grant financial aid from or to such authorities and bodies of persons.

It is not surprising then that a Joint Working Party of the organisations mentioned authorised C.I.S.W.O., the Local Authority and the L.E.A. (then Durham County) to proceed with plans for a joint project on the site of Boldon Comprehensive School.

The survey revealed that some indoor sports facilities were expected to be provided in a future school building programme at the Comprehensive School situated about a quarter of a mile from the Boldon Miners' Welfare Scheme. As statutory grant aid towards such a project it designed to embrace "community use" was limited, C.I.S.W.O. offered financial help towards the cost of any mutually agreed project.

The working party set up in 1968 comprising representatives of the Urban District Council, the Local Education Authority and the Coal Industry Social Welfare Organisation met several times and gave careful consideration to the nature of the facilities to be provided. In the early stages the feasibility of providing for a multitude of sporting, recreational and cultural facilities was examined and in the light of likely funds available the working party gave outline instructions to the County Architect on the facilities that should be planned.

At a meeting with representatives of Durham Education Committee and C.I.S.W.O. in March 1968, Dr. Reid, representing the Coal Board, indicated the proposals they wished to make concerning joint provision of community/sports facilities at Boldon Comprehensive School. He indicated that the Durham Welfare Committee were prepared to allocate an approximate sum of £50,000 towards any mutually agreed project to provide social welfare facilities for the

inhabitants as a whole, subject to all intended beneficiaries entering into a common membership arrangement. Dr. Reid expressed the view that C.I.S.W.O. was anxious to play a part in a project which would be mutually advantageous to the Statutory Authorities and to his organisation. He quoted a statement of the Ministry of Education at a Northern Sports Advisory Council meeting in January of that year:

"I want to stop providing recreation in water-tight compartments, where schools and industrial concerns have recreational facilities purely for their own use.

This sort of thing makes no sense at all these days, we have to put our sports together and get more value for it.

When we plan a new school it could be designed with a classroom block separate from a sports hall where a number of facilities should go on and not just gymnastics.

Where some schools are provided with two gymnasiums in the future one could be a multi-purpose sports hall and the other a swimming pool.

You could build all this around a social heart - where one could get a meal or a snack and outside you could have all-weather floodlit facilities. All this could be done at little extra cost and you could add local government recreational money to the education money so that by spending a little more on one project a district would get far more value.

We can no longer think in isolation. We should no longer build a school with just educational facilities in mind, for we have to exploit the potential of every pound."

Dr. Reid pointed out that it would be foolish to minimise the problems yet felt that the joint venture gave a real challenge - a challenge which could be considered unique. "Joint provision" was in operation in other parts of the country but without the benefit of a voluntary organisation such as C.I.S.W.O. offering to be a

substantial contributor. He stated that the challenge was "to examine the prospects of jointly provided facility which could enrich the lives of people in the locality".

From this meeting it was agreed that representatives be sent to the legal branch of the Department of Education and Science who were acting for the Charities Commission in the matter of recreational trusts. At a meeting held in London the Secretary of State indicated willingness to prepare a unifying document "which would incorporate other facilities into the New Trusts, for example the Miners' Welfare Recreation Ground and District Council Football Field. Within the overall plans it was decided to seek to merge legally the Boldon Miners' Welfare Recreation Ground and Institute with the project on the school site and with Statutory Authority maintenance grant-aid anticipated (to include for the appointment of a full-time Warden and other staff) agreement was reached for a sports/social block at the Comprehensive School. A 60 year peppercorn lease of the land from the Durham County Council (because of subsequent boundary revision now the Borough Council of South Tyneside) was then negotiated.

The Legal Branch of the Department of Education and Science was consulted on the question of constitution and the securing of adequate staffing and maintenance arrangements and a form of trust and management constitution which was deemed acceptable to all participating bodies was finally drawn up. After several drafting stages a constitution finally approved by all bodies concerned was submitted to the Charities Commission in October 1975. (The Commissioners had taken over such matters from the Department of Education and Science).

The Boldon Community Association comprises:-

- (a) The buildings and playing fields of a Comprehensive School.
- (b) Purpose-built buildings.
- (c) The buildings and playing fields of the Boldon Colliery Miners' Welfare Scheme.

These facilities are provided by:-

- (i) South Tyneside Education Authority (formerly Durham County Council).
- (ii) Coal Industries' Social Welfare Organisation.
- (iii) Management

Considerable tact is essential on the part of the main parties to joint provision and dual use schemes. The success of the Boldon Scheme bears a direct relationship to the trust, confidence and regard that the partners have for each other's point of view.

To safeguard the interests of the parties, the Rules of the Association arrange for the formation of a Management Committee, comprising members and advisers from many areas including the two mentioned above (i and ii). The 28 strong Management Committee plus the advisers has vested in it the power to control the decision-making and policy of the Centre.

The role of the Association Management Committee is:-

- (a) To administer South Tyneside Education Authority's building and equipment.

- (b) To administer on behalf of the Coal Industry Social Welfare Organisation.
- (c) To administer in such a way that the education of the child is not hindered by Association functions.
- (d) To administer and bear in mind problems that would occur for the school teaching staff due to Association functions.
- (e) To administer on behalf of the Community.
- (f) To uphold the Rules and Regulations of the Centre.

The general control and management of the Community Centre is vested in the Management Committee which consists of 28 members as follows:-

Four ex-officio members being the Trustees at the Centre.

Nominated members to be appointed:-

Three by the National Coal Board;

Two by the National Union of Mineworkers;

One by the National Association of Colliery Overmen
Deputies;

Four by the Borough Council of South Tyneside;

Two by the Governors of the School;

Eight Representative members of whom one shall be appointed by each of such clubs, societies or other bodies of persons interested in the provision of physical recreation or other leisure-time occupation in the Centre area as may be selected by the Trustees, and four elected members to be elected annually at a general meeting of persons using the Centre.

The twenty-eight as listed have the power to vote. The following list is of people invited to attend in an advisory capacity only:-

Head of School - Headmaster/Warden of Boldon Community Association;

Deputy Head;

Head of Girls;

Senior Adviser, Youth and Community, F.E. Dept. L.E.A.;

Legal Adviser, C.I.S.W.O.;

South Tyneside Legal Adviser;

School Staff Representative;

Full-time Centre Staff, two representatives;

Senior Caretaker - School and Centre.

As will be seen from the Management Committee structure, representations from all parties are included as well as the permanent advisers. The Management Committee has the power to co-opt other persons whose expertise and advice would be of assistance.

The Head Teacher of the school is also Warden of the Centre, responsible for the main day-to-day running of the scheme. His chief functions are:-

To ensure the fullest co-operation between the School and the Centre, and to ensure that no conflict of interest arises;

To call together the Liaison Committee to adjudicate on problems that cannot be resolved amicably;

To attend the meetings of the Management Committee
(and other groups as required);

To link with the officers of the Authority on all
aspects of the shared use scheme;

To report to School Governors on the workings of the
Centre;

To promote the aims and ideals of the Centre.

(iv) Job Descriptions

The Teacher Warden of the Centre is a member of the School
Staff with Deputy Head status and he also acts as Secretary and
Treasurer of the Centre. His main functions are:-

To attend all Management Committee meetings as
Secretary, responsible for agenda and meetings;

To execute the decisions of the Management Committee;

To report to the Committee on the activities of the
Centre;

To invite the attendance of those officers of the
Authority whose advice would be useful to the
Committee in its deliberations;

To supervise the work of the employees and staff of
the Centre;

To attend the meetings of the Social Club Committee
and offer advice;

To attend the section meetings and offer advice when invited to do so;

To control and co-ordinate the Centre timetable and to develop new sections, groups and activities;

To teach in school for eight periods per week and to take the opportunity in so doing of mixing with school staff and pupils in order to further the aims of the 'shared facilities' scheme;

As Treasurer to be responsible for the finances of the Centre (except those of the Social Club which have to be a separate entity).

The following staff are employed at the Centre:-

- 1 Full-time Secretary/Receptionist;
- 4 Youth Leaders;
- 6 Part-time Receptionists;
- 3 Swimming Pool Supervisors;
- 3 Pool Plant Operatives;
- 20 Further Education Staff;
- 6 Youth Activities Staff;
- 50 Section Leaders and Specialist Group Leaders.

The Assistant Youth and Further Education Officer is a member of the school staff with Scale 4 Head of Department status. His main functions are:-

The overall supervision of youth activities, for over 1,000 under 18 members including Youth Clubs, youth membership of sections and general integration of youth with the adult programmes of the Centre;

Collection of Further Education fees;

To assist the Teacher/Warden in the day-to-day running of the Centre, compilation of timetable and expansion of facilities;

To attend meetings of the Management Committee (and other groups as required) reporting on the activities of Youth and Further Education;

To work with the officers of the Authority in the provision of Youth and Further Education activities;

To represent the Centre at meetings of the Y.O.C. Council of which he is Secretary, the Federation of Community Associations and other bodies;

To teach eight periods per week in school;

To deputise for the Teacher/Warden when required to do so.

In addition, a trainee Youth and Community worker has been assigned to the Centre under the Job Creation Scheme.

(v) Buildings

The building/sports complex provides:-

Gymnasium

Sports Halls (Bowls, Archery)

Activity Rooms (Films, etc.)

Coffee Bar

Kitchen

Swimming Pool

Squash Court

Garage/car maintenance

Upper Floor - Bar

Additionally the school facilities and accommodation are programmed on a shared use basis reciprocally with the Community Centre facilities.

(vi) Activities

A long list of activities instituted includes most sports, dancing, junior and senior youth sections, bridge, car maintenance, metalwork, drama, golf coaching, first aid, dressmaking, floral art, painting, arts and crafts, pottery, modelling, nursery playgroup, adult literacy group, physically handicapped group, unemployed club and luncheon clubs for old people - some of the activities listed are under the auspices of further education. On the social side members can relax at leisure in a cafeteria, lounge and bar. In addition outdoor activities are available at the Miners' Welfare which include football, cricket, bowling, putting, whippet racing and a floodlit football coaching area. Additionally the Council football ground becomes part of the Trust. The old Institute with billiards and reading facilities completes the resources to be held under the new Trust.

Thus from its first conception in 1966 when the Boldon Welfare Committee began to look for a site on which to establish community provision for miners and their families, the Boldon area, with a population of approximately 24,000 has gained much. Dual provision has produced a complex which has a membership representative of the community as a whole, indeed drawing from wider areas within South Tyneside. The merging of the resources of the Miners' Welfare with those of the Local Authority has proved to be an act of faith on

each other's part which has paid off handsomely. The "shared use" scheme operated at Boldon Comprehensive School involving a partnership between the Local Authority and C.I.S.W.O. is unique. Sporting teams have changed their names from Boldon Colliery Welfare to Boldon Community Association. Miners, working and retired, acknowledge the benefits derived from the shared resource, although still referring to the school resource as the 'welfare'. Miners' subscriptions are now paid directly into the Centre to offset some of the running costs.

The equal partnership between Boldon Community Association and Boldon Comprehensive School is an attempt by the Local Authority and the Coal Industry Social Welfare Organisation to provide the Boldon area with facilities that can be used "from the cradle to the grave" in the pursuit of education for life in both senses of the term.

Two concepts must be borne in mind when considering schemes of this kind:

1. Dual Use: this refers to the sharing by the public of facilities originally provided for the pupils, outside the hours of school use.
2. Joint Provision: referring to two or more authorities co-operating together in joint planning for and provision of a facility for joint use.

The concepts of dual use and joint provision as illustrated in the Boldon Scheme are drawn together as an extension of the school organisation into a policy of "shared use" which implies a closer interaction between school and community than is necessarily

interpreted in the first two terms. In Boldon, both concepts are in operation, a dual use of school building by both the school and the community and the sharing of additional facilities provided by the Local Authority and C.I.S.W.O. Thus the Boldon Scheme is unique.

The initial programme of activity had begun in September 1974 prior to the acquisition of the Centre buildings. Basic activities took place in the school premises including a large proportion of youth work which had been a very real need in Boldon for some time. When the Trust premises were handed over in January 1976, the programme expanded to meet the increase in membership.

The use of the school falls into two main categories:-

1. The Trust premises are made available for pupils during the period 9.00 a.m. - 6.00 p.m. for bowls, squash, table tennis, swimming, etc.
2. Normal school evening use continues to operate as before including various meetings, e.g. P.T.A., N.A.S., N.U.T., etc., concerts, teachers' centre groups, pupils' discos and film clubs besides the normal P.E. team activities.

A number of specialist groups use the Centre. The Open University has over 50 students supervised by 6 course tutors. The Adult Literacy Group meets three times per week. Other activities include a Slimming Club organised by an outside firm with trained staff. The South Shields Referees' Society meets in the Centre and an Unemployed Social Group is timetabled for three afternoons per week. A Pre-School Nursery Playgroup is held each morning.

The Centre operates 52 weeks of the year except when it closes for public holidays.

(vii) Investigation

The study at Boldon was carried out during the spring term of the academic year 1977-78. The research report illustrates the nature of the 'shared use' provision at Boldon Comprehensive School. An attempt was made to examine the views of consumers, in particular parents, and a survey was carried out of parental involvement in the varied life of the school. As the scheme had been in full operation for three years and membership was open to all residents in the community, it was felt reasonable to assume that many parents of first year pupils were already members. Those who were not had had a full term in which to join and participate. The purpose of the investigation was to consider the practice and implications of the 'shared facilities' scheme at Boldon and discover how this has been received by the parents. It appeared that the scheme, as that at Hedworthfield, had been well received and the community viewed the innovations at Boldon favourably. An attempt was made to discover whether this opinion was held by parents of pupils at the school. It was acknowledged that the shared facilities scheme at Boldon had only been operating for three years but it was felt that the impact upon the community had appeared to be of sufficient note for an enquiry to be made. The Boldon Comprehensive School has been described as a "community school" and although the term has been applied to a number of educational establishments, and Hatch and Moylan (1972)¹, for example, concluded from a survey of existing secondary community schools that most seemed to be doing little more than any "progressive"

1 Hatch, S. and Moylan, S. "The Role of the Community School", in, Equality and City Schools, (eds.) Raynor, J. and Hardin, J. Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972, pp. 218-225.

secondary school, the term does seem appropriate in this case. If it is accepted that the community school attempts to extend the role of the school, to encourage closer relationships with other adult institutions and community services and to blend in the school with the community, then Boldon, with its community orientated ethos, would appear to be quite different from those schools surveyed by Hatch and Moylan.

The use of a self-completion questionnaire was deemed the most suitable means of obtaining information and it was decided that a survey of the parents of pupils in years 1 - 5 be carried out. The front cover of the questionnaire was designed to elicit from the parent completing the form, the year group of the pupil and the number of pupils covered by the survey. The questionnaire was structured into two parts. The first part was designed to gain information concerned with identifying views of parents about communications with the school, and to measure the extent of their contact. The second part was aimed at finding out what parents thought about the community use of the school and to ascertain how involved parents were in the various aspects of the community use of the school. From this an attempt would be made to relate the two parts by assessing whether the 'shared facilities' factor encourages parents to come to the school.

The self-completion questionnaires were distributed to the pupils who were asked to convey them to their parents and return them during the following week. A total of 590 questionnaires were handed to pupils in years 1 - 5. Some were not received by pupils because of illness and absence, a number were not delivered to their

parents or were not collected from them. A total of 299 returns was received. Allowing for absenteeism of 9% during the week of distribution, this gave a 51% response rate.

An important aspect of the investigation at Boldon was not only asking what they do but watching how they do it. It is important to recognise that the description 'shared facilities' has not so much to do with the buildings and how they are financed as with the attitudes of the users and the way in which the sharing is organised. Initially it was hoped to survey opinions from teachers alongside those of parents, however it was decided that an attempt be made to study the views of the consumer, in particular parents, about the specific effects of the shared use scheme at Boldon Comprehensive School. A survey was made of parental involvement in the varied life of the school, with special reference to traditional school-based activities. The study was restricted to a "snapshot survey" along the lines of a market research project.

As indicated in the description of the pilot study at Hedworthfield, the questionnaire issued to the parents of pupils at Boldon enquired about the two aspects of school-parent communication expressed in the report by J.M. Bynner, "Parents' Attitudes to Education",

"Parents who maintain close contact with the school are in a strong position to give their children educational support. Similarly, those schools that take pains to keep parents informed about their child's progress may help them to give the child this support."²

Given the market research approach, the use of a self-completion questionnaire was judged the most suitable means of obtaining information. The questionnaire was structured in two parts.

The first part was aimed at identifying the views of parents concerning contacts with the school. It was important to know what parents thought about the different methods of communication between home and school and to measure the frequency of contact between school personnel and parents. It was hoped that the questionnaire may give some guidelines in considering the efficiency and effect of the various types of contact communication used. From the information gained it may be possible to discover factors associated with the failure of communication.

The second part of the questionnaire considered parental involvement in the life and work of the school through the shared use scheme. An attempt will be made to discover whether this method of contact between home and school influences parents' attitudes to school.

It was important to know what parents thought about the Boldon Centre, especially the school and also to ascertain how involved parents were in the various aspects at Boldon Comprehensive School.

As indicated in the Pilot Survey an attempt was made to obtain as near to a 100% return as was possible. In accordance with this aim, arrangements were made to discuss the distribution of the questionnaires with Heads of Year. Every effort was to be made to distribute the forms with as little disruption to the school organisation as was possible. It was agreed that Form Tutors would

Pupils in the school (1 - 5 years)

		<u>Issued</u>
1st year	168	150
2nd year	171	151
3rd year	177	86
4th year	173	105
5th year	177	98
	<u>866</u>	<u>590</u>

590 questionnaires issued to parents

299 returned 51%

416 pupils 48% of pupils in school

71% of pupils of parents issued

issue questionnaires beginning with the first year, and subsequent year tutors, up to the fifth form who could issue questionnaires only to those pupils without a brother or sister in the lower year groups. It was accepted that this did not allow for some margin of error in distribution, but appeared to be the simplest method of issue. The Form Tutors were asked to check carefully that only one questionnaire was issued to each family in the school. Some difficulty was experienced in agreeing a method of distribution of questionnaires to absentees and it was finally decided to leave these out of the sample accepting the attendance figure for the week of distribution as the significant factor when considering the percentage of returns. During the preliminary discussions with the Head and staff of the school, the author became aware of the considerable difference in the ease of control of an investigation carried out in his own school and that carried out in another organisation.

Altogether 590 questionnaires were handed out to pupils in years 1 - 5. The findings are based upon a return of 299 questionnaires representing 51% of the parents to whom questionnaires were issued, and 416 pupils or 71% of pupils to whom forms were issued. Although falling short of the pilot study, by the light of other "mail order" surveys, this response may be considered satisfactory.

I. PARENTS' VISITS TO SCHOOL

TABLE 1

Parents' visits to the school for educational reasons

		%
Have not visited	28	10
One visit	39	13
Two visits	36	12
Three or more visits	187	62
Not completed	9	3

The first feature of the study to be reported, as outlined previously, deals with the frequency of contact between school personnel and parents. Table 1 indicates that 87% of the parents had contact with the school concerning their child's educational progress. This would appear to be somewhat higher than the pilot scheme at Hedworthfield with a difference of 16% in those scoring "Three or more visits". It needs to be pointed out, however, that the pilot scheme was carried out earlier in the school year and significant is the difference in the number who had not visited the school; pilot scheme 24% (October), Boldon 10% (March). An investigation of the returns indicates that many of these are parents of first year pupils. Assuming that a visit to the school for educational reasons would include a talk, the extent of communication between the parents and teachers at Boldon Comprehensive School was greater than that shown in the findings of Enquiry 1 (1968) which indicated that 29% of parents had three or more talks with the heads or class teachers, whereas the Boldon figure is 62%.

Table 1 also indicates that only 10% of the parents completing the questionnaire had not visited the school whereas Enquiry 1 gave a total of 30%. However, it should be noted that this figure was reduced to 16% for 15 year old leavers when expressed simply in terms of contact. Enquiry 1 showed that 67% of parents interviewed discussed the educational progress of their child compared with the Boldon total of 87%. Schools Council Enquiry 1 commented that some degree of parental non-attendance is due to the fact that invitations sent home with children sometimes fail to arrive - either by accident or design. Boldon Comprehensive School prides itself on home/school links and on a continuous flow of information about events at school and community centre. One would, therefore, expect a higher response rate than for many other schools but this was not evident in the returns and the fact that 40% of parents were only fairly satisfied with information received on child's progress suggests little cause for complacency (Table 6). This suggests that the 20% increase in parental contact for educational reasons in Boldon over Enquiry 1 may be attributable to the community scheme in operation at Boldon.

The results of the Boldon Survey which show parental involvement can be compared usefully, if only approximately, with the results shown in the "Young School Leavers Study".

Table 2 (see below) shows that only 17% of the parents had visited the school for reasons concerned with attendance, misbehaviour and complaints, and less than 3% had three or more visits to the school for these reasons (Enquiry 1 - 21%).

TABLE 2

Parents' visits to school for attendance,
behaviour or complaints

		%
Have not visited	242	81
One visit	27	9
Two visits	10	5
Three or more visits	10	3
Not completed	6	2

TABLE 3

Visits for reasons not listed

		%
Visited the school	54	19
Have not visited the school	237	79
Not completed	8	2

Table 3 shows that 54 parents visited the school for reasons not listed, that is 19%, whereas 237 parents, (70%), did not visit the school for reasons other than those stated in the questionnaire. The reasons for the visits not listed varied; a number were concerned with the entry of new pupils, others were of an educational nature or for complaints parents felt came outside of the general statement in the questionnaire and many were of a personal nature. These included visits to the Parent-Teacher Association to discuss such issues as the Taylor Report, mathematics teaching and the annual

general meeting, advice from the Headmaster for obtaining help in the purchase of school uniform, pupil's position in the school band, the problem experienced by an overweight pupil within her group, arrangements for organised school holidays, school refusal of facilities for taking packed lunches, together with the rather wry comment: "Took a cow's and a pig's head for the Biology Laboratory".

TABLE 4

Parents' visits to school functions

		%
Open days/evenings, check progress	222	74
Prize Giving/Speech Days	14	7
Sports Days/Swimming Galas	44	15
School plays/Concerts	130	44
Careers Meetings	102	34
Jumble Sales	166	56
None attended	44	15

The figures set out in Table 4 show parental participation in school functions:-

Open days/evenings: 74% of the parents sampled had attended these events (Enquiry 1 - 59%). The high level of involvement in formal open days or evenings at Boldon is not surprising when an aim of the school is to project itself into the community both through the Parent-Teacher Association and the Community Association.

Prize Giving/Speech Days: only 7% of the parents at Boldon attended this function, compared with 44% in the pilot study at Hedworthfield. This is not surprising as the school does not organise a formal function of this kind, inviting a large audience. Certificates and awards are usually presented at small, informal functions, attended only by the recipients and their parents.

Sports Days/Swimming Galas/Games: the low response of 15% (Enquiry 1 - 34%) is surprising in an area where competitive team sports are encouraged. The policy of the Community Association to encourage personal physical activity as well as traditional competitive team sports may account in part for the low response.

School plays/Concerts: in an area such as Boldon with a fairly low cultural profile, it could be difficult to attract parents to this type of activity, therefore a figure of 44% appears high (Enquiry 1 - 36%) and could be attributed in no small part to the community involvement at the school.

Careers Meetings: the 34% response to these meetings (Enquiry 1 - 13%) was high as may perhaps be expected at a time of exceptionally high unemployment. It is important to acknowledge that the school runs an intensive careers programme and is very conscious of the vocational aspect of school work.

Jumble Sales: 56% of the parents had attended jumble sales and bazaars (Enquiry 1 - 27%). This is in line with the findings of the pilot study (51%) and to some extent reflects the social priorities of many of the parents. It may well, however, also reflect the successful encouragement of parental co-operation and involvement.

II. HOW PARENTS FEEL SCHOOL RESPONDS TO VISITS

TABLE 5

Parents' views of arrangements to see the Head or Teachers

		%
Responses	290	
Completely happy	198	68
Fairly happy	83	29
Not happy	6	2
Very unhappy	3	1
Not completed	10	3

The Boldon Survey indicated a strong correlation with Enquiry 1 in that the great majority of parents said that they were completely happy with the arrangements at the school for them to see the Head or a class teacher. Only 9 parents said that they were not happy or very unhappy. 198 parents indicated that they were completely happy and 13 fairly happy. A number of parents indicated their dissatisfaction with present arrangements and a few made recommendations for improvement. Several parents commented,

"Have never been told what the arrangements are".

"Not aware of any arrangements".

"Arrangements not known".

"My child is in first year and I am not sure what the arrangements are".

Other parents understood the arrangements but

"As it is Joy's first year I have not yet had to involve myself in school work".

"I have not had to use the present arrangements".

A number of constructive comments for the improvement of the arrangements were:

"Informal meetings with parents".

"Arrangements by appointment so each parent can have a reasonable time".

"Evening meetings termly with individual departments".

"More time should be given to open evenings/careers. Usually long queues and it is not possible to see all the teachers one would wish to".

Comments from two parents were strongly critical:

"Too many parents in too short a time to see too few teachers. Three times I have visited the school and talked to a teacher on one occasion only".

"More private arrangements, not like a herd of cattle waiting to stampede to an empty spot".

These comments echo the suggestions for improvement made in Enquiry 1 that there should be more open days/evenings and that special times should be set aside when the staff may be seen.

"It would be useful if teachers were available one evening a month for parents to see".

"The Head Teacher is nearly always too busy to see parents and as I am at work all day I find it difficult to fit in - the teachers are not available either - I

think one period a month should be set aside when the Head would be available to parents".

"I think the Head should have certain periods of time during the week when parents could go and see him without necessarily making an appointment beforehand".*

The Boldon survey, although taken ten years later than Enquiry 1, still suggests dissatisfaction on the part of parents that insufficient time was available for a proper discussion with the teacher or that teachers were not accessible enough.

TABLE 6

Parents' responses to how well school informs them
of child's progress

		%
Responses	297	
Very well	116	39
Well	59	20
Quite well	97	32
Not well	25	8
Not completed	2	1

Enquiry 1, "Young School Leavers" stated that many parents felt that there was not enough interchange of information between the schools and themselves. In the Boldon enquiry, the responses which were used to examine more closely communications between home and school showed a greater degree of criticism. Although 39% of

* Morton-Williams, R. and Finch, S. et al. Young School Leavers. Schools Council Enquiry/H.M.S.O., 1968, para. 189, pp. 110-111.

parents thought the school kept them well informed of their child's progress, 8% indicated that they were not well informed, and though 20% indicated they were well satisfied, 32% suggested that they were only fairly satisfied. Surprisingly, in a school promoting improved school/home contact through shared use of premises and with over 62% of the parents visiting the school for educational reasons, 40% of the parents in the sample felt that at the most they were only quite well informed of their child's progress.

TABLE 7

Parents' views of how the school welcomes visits
without an appointment

		%
Responses	195	
Very well	83	28
Well	54	18
Quite well	54	18
Not well	4	1
Not completed	104	35

Enquiry 1 discovered that over half the parents of 15 year old leavers felt that they were interfering if they went to school uninvited. This was not found in the Boldon survey where only 1% of parents indicated that they were not well received at the school without an appointment. A total of 35% of parents did not complete this question, suggesting that they had not found the need to visit the school without an appointment.

TABLE 8

How satisfied did parents feel with the arrangements
at the school for allowing them to speak to a particular teacher?

		%
Responses	220	
Very well	99	33
Well	58	19
Quite well	54	18
Not well	9	3
Not completed	79	27

The greater majority of the parents who responded to this question were happy with the situation with only 9 parents indicating they were unhappy. Once again a large number of parents (27%) did not complete this section. This is somewhat surprising as it would have been expected that an opinion would have been given, even if associated with open evenings. It is suggested, however, that the response to this question may have been related to that concerning visiting the school without an appointment. It would appear that some correlation does exist in the response to the two questions.

In Enquiry 1, many parents felt that there was not enough interchange of information between the schools and themselves. About one-third of 15 year old leavers' parents felt that teachers should have asked them more about their child. The Boldon survey indicates that of parents who completed this section of the questionnaire only 2% were unhappy about the arrangements, whereas 38% were very well satisfied. Once again a high proportion of parents did not complete

this section, perhaps indicating that they did not feel the need to avail themselves of this form of communication.

TABLE 9

How school responds to parents' wish to give
special information regarding child

		%
Responses	212	
Very well	114	38
Well	44	15
Quite well	49	16
Not well	5	2
Not completed	87	29

The response to this question supported the view that parental access to the school was readily available. Table 8 shows that 69% of the parents were satisfied with the opportunity given to discuss with the Headmaster and teachers something important about their child. Only 5 parents felt dissatisfaction about their contact with the school on this issue. A significant number of parents (87) did not complete this question, perhaps indicating that they had not found the need for this communication. The responses to section A.7 of the Enquiry correlate well. The parents' rating of their contacts with school for each of the four questions showed a high degree of satisfaction. The percentage of parents in each section of the four point scale showed consistency in their response to each question.

TABLE 10

Parents' views on success or otherwise of school
visits concerning their child

		%
Responses	285	
You have wasted your time	14	5
Slightly better understanding	65	23
Have a better understanding	67	24
Well worth taking the trouble to go	139	49
Not completed	14	5

Given the option of a four point scale, parents indicated clearly their degree of satisfaction after visiting the school. Although 14 parents indicated that they had wasted their time when visiting the school, 49% expressed the opinion that it was well worth the trouble to go. It is suggested that the rating of these responses indicates some measure of success in parent-school relationships.

III. COMMUNITY USE OF THE SCHOOL

TABLE 11

The response of parents to the community use of the school

		%
Strongly agree	187	63
Agree	105	35
Disagree	3	1
Strongly disagree	0	0
Not completed	4	1

None of the parents who responded to the questionnaire strongly disagreed with use of the school for community activities and only 3 were unhappy about such use and indicated disagreement. The response indicated an almost blanket approval - 98% of parents in favour of the use of the school by the wider community. Perhaps more significant was the answer given to question B.5 concerning the benefit derived by the child and the very large response made by parents to the open ended part of the question enabling them to express their views about community use of the school.

TABLE 12

Parents' views of benefit to children

		%
Benefits your child	227	76
Makes no difference	38	13
Your child is worse off	0	0
Child does not attend	31	10
Not completed	4	1

Closely related to the large approval of parents to the community use of the school was the very high percentage, (76%), who felt that this community use benefited their child. It is also significant that although a few parents did disagree with the community use of the school, none felt that their child was worse off. A small percentage of parents, though supporting the use of the school by the community, felt that it had little influence upon their child.

As seen in the pilot study, the 247 parents who answered the open ended question covered the many aspects of community use of schools which are being currently debated. The responses indicating benefit could be broadly categorised into areas related to school and community, social education, family support and economic factors. No parent felt that from the community use of the school their child was worse off, 31 parents stated that their child did not attend and only 4 parents did not complete this section. In total 38 parents (13%) indicated that the community use of the school made no difference to their child. Many of the parents who ticked this part of question B.5 did not give a reason for their choice, however others gave a number of reasons for no benefit, ranging from non-attendance to a rather basic interpretation of the term "benefit":

"Child does not attend, inadequate transport available".

"Too young and we live too far away".

"School too far away from home for younger child to attend without transport".

These are curious comments when one considers the nature of the Boldon catchment area, unless these responses refer to pupils outside the area. Several responses simply commented on non-attendance as lack of benefit. Others made direct reference to the child's interest and his school work.

"My son is a member of the community centre and goes down quite often but I can't say it makes any difference with his school work".

"I think it makes no difference because my children do not attend that often".

"My daughter does not show any interest as yet, I don't feel it influences her life at school at all".

"As he is only at school during school hours it makes no difference".

Other family interests and membership of groups not connected to the school were also listed as non-benefit factors:

"She does not want to join Ladies' Sections (she is 11), play indoor bowls, play squash, play badminton or join a badminton group and prefers swimming in public baths with younger brothers and myself".

"I would like my son to attend some of the community activities but he has no wish, as yet, to do so. The reason for my non-membership is other commitments to church and parish functions".

"We have a full schedule of family activity together and it gives little time to use the school in the evening".

Two parents were critical of the community provision:

"My daughter is a member but does not attend very often as she feels that the centre has deteriorated".

"Community Association does not provide the facilities to enable my son to follow his parents' hobbies, model making, music, reading. He is not interested in energetic sport".

As Boldon traditionally maintained strong community links, especially within the mining fraternity, before the opening of the school for community use, it would be expected that the fundamental needs of the neighbourhood would be expressed in the responses.

"Facilities are more likely to be well maintained where the community at large has an interest in them. Where varying age groups have a common interest a community spirit is more likely to develop to the benefit of all".

"Community interest benefits all children collectively".

"Facilities always available for leisure hours thus keeping children both interested and occupied during after school hours".

"Meeting of parents in a place common to all where they can join in activities allowed".

"I feel that the facilities provided by the school for sport and outdoor activities are far better than can be normally provided".

"In this day of vandalism I feel an area has benefited from our community centre as there is always something going on that teenagers can participate in".

"In an area it is the only activity for children and teenagers and it may be a means of deterring vandalism".

Many parents, as in the Hedworthfield pilot study, interpreted the benefit of shared use basically as that of parental or family support.

"With so little activity in the village I find the community centre gives her something to do".

"It gives Deborah somewhere to go other than hanging around the streets".

"When the children are at the community centre I know exactly where they are".

One or two of the responses indicated that these parents viewed the family support gained from community use of the school more philosophically.

"Gives you a common interest allowing you to share and talk and understand your children".

"Because you can have a family night out with all the entertainment".

Many of the responses to this open ended question on "benefit" were concerned with the economic use of expensive school plant. Comments were concerned directly with full use of the buildings and equipment, the benefits derived by both school and community from shared resources and the effect upon the family purse. It was interesting to note that no reference was made to C.I.S.W.O., yet a large number of miners' children attend the school.

"Whether my child is involved or not, I believe that the whole system benefits by greater involvement and I believe it is wasteful to have millions of pounds'

worth of capital equipment standing idle after 4.00 p.m. daily".

"Provides opportunities not otherwise available".

"The facilities would be wasted if only in school hours. Now maximum use is made and children can be involved at a reasonable cost and in easy reach of home".

"The school children can only benefit by the extra finance and facilities that the Community Association brings to the school premises".

"My boys are all members of the community centre and take part in many activities, e.g. Five-a-Side, swimming, table tennis. We are a one-parent family and I find it a boon that my children can enjoy themselves at very little cost".

"It sometimes brings money into the school and this can be spent on things which the education does not allow".

"It enables my children to participate in sports activities together, it is conveniently situated and the entrance fees are very reasonable, thus enabling my children and their friends to go frequently".

"I think the opportunities for leisure activities provided are very beneficial particularly in this area where there are not a great deal of inexpensive places for youngsters to go".

"Gives children an outside interest without costing a lot of 'bus fares".

As found in the pilot study, a large number of parents showed a sympathy and understanding of the benefit derived from the "shared use" of school plant over and above that of basic family support "keeping them off the streets" and the economic use of expensive school plant. Many parents showed a perceptive understanding of the effect that the community use of the school could have upon the social education of children and the benefits to be derived from promoting strong links between school, home and community. The responses of a social nature were concerned with experience and relationships.

"Because he meets new people and learns new activities".

"Gives my children a better outlook and keeps them out of trouble and they like to come to the community centre".

"Helps broaden his outlook on life".

"Because it gives my child interest out of school hours".

"Encourages Ann to join other children in various activities and gives her other interests".

"To keep him away from any trouble and benefits him in sporting activities".

"Gives the child a chance to join the extra activities and increases his general knowledge and increases his physical fitness".

"It provides a meeting place for children in the evening and gives them a chance to develop skills which they may not otherwise get".

"My child really enjoys coming to the community centre and it puts in a few hours' pleasure to her".

"My child can take his friends who do not attend his school for games. Therefore makes my child proud and pleased to go to school".

"Helps make a child more aware of what goes on around him".

"Allows my child to integrate with both older and younger persons of either sex in all the activities within the school".

"Susan acts as baths attendant one evening per week and she plays squash. I think the former gives her confidence in meeting people and the latter is a good experience".

"Broadens child's interests".

"It enables children of all ages to meet socially, providing a venue for those with mutual interests to exchange ideas and expertise".

"Permits him to meet friends after school for organised activities also teaches him respect for school property".

"Because it helps her with her after-school activities, which also help her in her growing up".

"Schools must educate children on how to spend leisure time more favourably with facilities for sport and leisure".

"If your question is directed towards the teaching of my children then the community activities make little

difference, however, attendance at such functions can be socially beneficial".

An appreciation of the service the school may give to the wider community and to the family is shown in the parents' comments. Aspects of social education promoted by the strengthening of links between home and school were shown by the large number of responses which made reference to school, home and community.

"She may use the school in school holidays".

"Opening the school to the community allows ideas to be passed both ways between educationalists and those who live and work in a wider sphere which, if taken notice of, can only be of benefit to children at school".

"It allows people of all ages to pursue and enjoy leisure activities of their choice and gives an insight of the educational facilities for our children".

"It gives my children an interest in sport and other activities that they may not have had without the Community Association. It is a place to go and meet friends outside of school and they enjoy it".

"Facilities always available for leisure hours thus keeping children and parents both interested and occupied during after school hours".

"Bigger range of activities. Contact with other sections of the community. Feeling that buildings are not just a school".

"If they were needed, there is, by this, a meeting place for my child with good amenities to enjoy and the parents too can become part of the activities, enjoying them".

"It must be beneficial to any pupil to participate and become involved in activities that are not directly involved with the normal school routine but, at the same time, make them feel they are part of the community".

"The child is better off because it can follow any interests it has with the use of tools and equipment which may not be available at home, it also creates a sense of belonging".

"It helps the child to get used to attending a bigger school".

Of particular significance were the following responses:

"Because it gets the parents used to using the school and therefore visiting the school is not such an ordeal".

"My children can "belong" to the school long after their formal education there has finished. The fact that the school is being used at night by hundreds of people may be a deterrent to would-be vandals".

"Any activities which involve the community in the life of the school are important and must avoid a class bias by only valuing educational activities".

"It benefits my child to be able to come home and tell me about the school, for us to take an active part and for us to understand the school better".

TABLE 13

Parents' visits to the school for community reasons

		%
Have not visited	110	37
One visit	25	8
Two visits	12	4
Three or more visits	144	48
Not completed	8	3

Table 13 indicates that 60% of the parents who completed the questionnaire had visited the school for community reasons, with 144 parents (or 48%) engaged in three or more visits. Although this is a higher percentage than the pilot study at Hedworthfield, considering the extensive nature of the provision at Boldon a 37% non-participation by parents may be a factor to be considered. Some discrepancy was seen in correlating the responses to questions B.2 and B.7 with 38% of the parents who completed the questionnaire indicating in answer to B.7 that they had not attended any of the functions arranged by the Community Association. This may have been caused by misunderstanding or incorrect recording.

The visits to school were mainly of a social nature with 75 parents (or 25%) engaged in sporting activities. Leisure-based evening classes are fairly well supported with 19% of parents attending and 31% of the parents who completed the questionnaire attending some form of organised evening class, leisure or educational based. Tables 4 and 13 indicate that educational and community activities organised by the school are well supported yet marginally below the findings in Enquiry 1.

TABLE 14

Parents' rating of the activities organised

Sporting activities	621
Evening classes (educational)	792
Senior citizens'	881
Uniformed organisation, scouts, etc.	917
Yoga, slimming clubs, etc.	958
Dances, social evenings, etc.	1086
Evening classes (recreational)	1202

N.B. The lower the total the higher the rating.

In line with the figures concerned with participation in community activities, parents rated sporting activities very highly. Table 14 indicates that parents felt that sporting activities were the most important provision the school could make for the community next to teaching. Although not rated highly in the community participation tables, parents rated educational evening classes next in importance to sporting activities, with recreational evening classes at the bottom of the list.

TABLE 15

Parents' views of the function of a Community Association

		%
Organise recreational activities	203	68
Work for services in the neighbourhood	79	26
Organise money-raising efforts for the school	108	36
Have a say in the running of the school	29	10

This indicates the views of parents concerning the work of a Community Association. The responses showed that 68% of the parents returning questionnaires believed that the prime function should be to organise recreational activities with a 36% rating for money-raising efforts to support the school. Direct community involvement is not an aspect of the Boldon "shared use" scheme which is rated highly. This is seen in the content of the responses to the open ended section of question B.5 and the 26% response to question B.8 concerning work for services in the neighbourhood.

This is a much lower rating than that shown at Hedworthfield and indicates to some extent the different nature of the two organisations. Perhaps reflecting the traditional values of the locality, the parents of Boldon, as at Hedworthfield, rated participation in the running of the school very low indeed with only 29 parents, 10% of the sample, indicating support for this aspect of community participation.

TABLE 16

Membership of Parent-Teacher Association

		%
Responses	299	
Members	49	16

Considering the high percentage of parents at Boldon participating in the many activities organised by Boldon Comprehensive School, Table 16 indicating membership of the Parent-Teacher Association is surprising. Only 49 parents who returned questionnaires acknowledged membership of the P.T.A., representing 16% of the sample. Assuming that the committed parent will have made a special effort to return the questionnaire, it may be accepted that this is a representative figure.

TABLE 17

Membership of Community Association

		%
Responses	299	
Members	119	40

Table 17 indicates that 40% of the parents completing the questionnaire were members of the Community Association, a high percentage of the number of the parents who indicated that they had visited the school for community activities. Membership of the various sections (Table 17a) indicated the emphasis at the centre upon sporting activities. Of special note is the high

TABLE 17a

Membership of the various sections of Community Association

		%
Ladies' Section	54	18
Indoor Bowls	5	2
Family Swimming Club	49	16
Badminton	15	5
Squash	14	5
None	162	54

membership of the Family Swimming Club (16%). This activity would seem to lend itself particularly well to family participation. Also the 18% membership of the Ladies' Section may indicate that women either have more time to spare or are more willing to become involved in this kind of home-school activity.

As in the pilot study, the questionnaires were carefully checked for analysis correlation. The responses were subjected to a consistency test: questions A.1 - 3 were compared with the response to A.4 and B.2 with B.7. Few examples of misunderstanding or incorrect recording were discovered. Four parents did not correlate their response to A.1, visits to school for educational reasons, with A.4 which particularly specified the nature of the educational visit.

It was noted that 10% of the sample indicated they had not visited the school for educational reasons and 15% of the parents completing the questionnaire indicated non-attendance at the specified school functions. It is suggested that the 5% discrepancy may be found in the percentage of parents who visited the school for reasons not listed.

A discrepancy was discovered in the responses to questions B.2 and B.7. In the response to question B.2, 37% of the parents who completed the questionnaire indicated that they had not visited the school for community reasons, whereas 38% indicated that they had not attended specified community functions. Investigation of the questionnaires showed that none of the parents ticked non-attendance for community activities then ticked a specified community activity attended, however 3 parents did not complete question B.2 yet ticked the non-attended box of question B.7.

It was felt that it would be useful to compare the findings of the Boldon survey with those of Enquiry 1 relating to relationships between homes and schools. Although Enquiry 1 was not concerned primarily with the effect 'shared facilities' may have upon these relationships, it was considered that the findings of the Report would be useful in setting a standard. An important finding in Enquiry 1 was the evidence that parents of 15 year old leavers frequently lacked the active interest and participation in their children's education which is of great importance to the work of the schools. Of particular interest was the finding that teachers were in almost complete agreement over the need to take positive steps to encourage less interested parents to visit the schools. The answers given by the parents suggested that their non-attendance was due not so much to an absence of concern about their child's progress at school, but to three main attitudes: the delegation of all responsibility for education to the school and, in particular, a failure to see a need for contact with the school

unless something was wrong; a very generally-held view that they would be interfering with the school if they went uninvited - indeed for many this needed to be a very specific personal invitation - and, finally, a lack of confidence in their own ability to have a satisfactory talk with the teachers if they went.

The findings of the Boldon Survey correlated strongly with Enquiry 1 in that ten years later parents were still very concerned about the importance of communication between the school and the home. Parents were still anxious to be told more about how their child was getting on. It is suggested that the Boldon Survey does indicate a greater confidence on the part of parents in contacting the school. Many felt that a specific invitation to attend school was not required and a measure of satisfaction about the nature of the contact between the home and the school was expressed.

(viii) Conclusions

The investigation at Boldon was concerned with "shared facilities": an interpretation of the community school as a resource not only for all school-aged children in the catchment area but also a facility for the adult and pre-school population. The school began as a secondary school. During the planning of its conversion to a comprehensive school, the Coal Industry Social Welfare Organisation put forward their scheme for joint provision of sporting facilities for community use. Shortly afterwards Ministry Circular 2/70, "A Chance to Share", was the subject of a working party set up by Durham County Council. The outcome of these two

factors was that a community school, one of the first in the area, was established at Boldon.

In the case study a suggestion is made that by using facilities in this way communication with parents is improved, they are more well disposed towards the school and have a better understanding of the working of the school. The results of the findings from the questionnaires returned by the parents indicate that they view the 'shared use' of the school very favourably indeed. The answers to "How does it benefit your child?" indicate that parents who answered the open ended question showed a great deal of perception into the educational and social spin-off that may be derived from the wider use of school facilities.

Participant observation produced little evidence of a substantial increase in direct parent-teacher interaction, but there appeared to be a more indirect communication in the form of an increased trust and understanding of the teacher on the part of the parent. 'Shared use' did give an opportunity for teachers and parents to meet informally on a greater number of occasions but this was restricted to those who participated in the organised activities. A few teachers were employed to run or instruct the clubs and classes arranged. Greater contact did occur at social occasions organised by the Community Association and in particular in the use of the bar facilities by both staff and parents at Boldon.

There is broad educational value in the opportunity provided by 'shared facilities' for the different age groups to share activities both of an educational and a recreational nature. Benefit is also derived from the social contact provided by persons of a wide age range sharing the same facilities.

A useful source of valuable sociological information was the bar of the Association. It was here that a number of discussions took place about the activities at the centre and opinions were "often obtained in casual talks on an absolutely equal footing and through friendly intercourse", as Moser puts it. The majority of family members to be met in this setting were those who were involved in the activities provided by the Community Association. Their attendance at these functions indicated support for the concept of community involvement encouraged by the school. It was interesting to note the different opinions of members, varying from a total commitment to the school to those who view the community centre as a separate unit with little or no connection with the school. Many of the mining fraternity still viewed the centre as the 'institute' and showed little understanding or interest in the wider concept of the community school. Strong family ties exist within the mining community at Boldon and the 'institute' and the 'clubs' were often the only other community group with which members came into contact.

Wiseman stresses the value to educational attainment of the family which is actively co-operative to education. On the other hand, he pin-points the debilitating effects of the actively hostile family, and also of the large group of passive conformists, including quite able and intelligent parents, who, according to Wiseman, prefer to keep "down with the Smiths" and thus forego life chances for their children.

J.B. Mays claims that,

"... a good school may have a potentially civilising effect on a whole community, the primary requirements being that the teachers should have an adequate conception both of the nature of society and of their social role as well as being able to imbue their pupils with formal knowledge."

Mays' theme is that there is a need for "a new focus of community development, as no institution today so nearly fits this role as the school"¹.

The comprehensive school has potential value as a focus for community life, especially if the school is purpose-built to include such a wider function. There is some evidence from the research to suggest that the comprehensive school at Boldon, specially adapted and added to, if not originally built for community use, is becoming a focal point for some aspects of community life. It is difficult to ascertain to what extent the attractions of the activities provided by the Boldon Centre are encouraging families to become more outward looking, but there is substantial evidence to show that parents are conscious of the need for a social resource for their youngsters outside of the family. Some evidence is shown of complete family involvement in the activities of the centre, yet it must be noted that several respondents indicated that the family provided its own resource for entertainment and social experience. It may be interpreted from the research that, relatively speaking, parent participation and membership of the various clubs and activities are comparatively low when examined against the membership of the wider community. It is not difficult then to test the hypothesis that

1 Mays, J.B. The School in its Social Setting. Longman, 1967.

through greater use of shared resources parents show more interest in the school functions. It would be difficult to find evidence to support any assumption that shared facilities may provide a bonus in the classroom or that it may increase the number of aspirant parents through increased parental involvement in the school, but there is a strong indication in the observations made at Boldon that the concept of shared facilities encourages a closer relationship and a better understanding between school and parents.

This closer understanding or sympathy is not necessarily associated with direct physical contact between the parent and school. There is insufficient evidence to relate an increase of visits to the school for community reasons with better understanding, but replies to the open ended question concerned with benefit to the child suggest an improved understanding of the work of the school especially in aspects of social education. It is suggested that the greatest influence upon parent-teacher relationships created by the shared use of the school is one of goodwill. The bonus is an appreciation by the parent of the social objectives of shared use schemes and through this a greater understanding and sympathy for the work of teachers.

This same appreciation and subsequent expression of goodwill towards the school was apparent in the pilot research at Hedworthfield. The Hedworthfield research indicated a further bonus derived from shared use in the political nature of the scheme. The direct influence of school through the community association upon aspects of the welfare of people in the community other than parents gained support for the school from that wider community. There is certainly

a great deal of evidence in the pilot study at Hedworthfield and the research at Boldon to show support for the community/shared facilities concept of education. Observations at Hedworthfield and Boldon together with several visits to Perth Green and Ox Close, all shared facility schemes based upon secondary schools, suggest that schools make a logical nucleus for a community/shared facilities establishment.

Participant observation in these four schemes readily highlighted the different nature of the interpretation of the term community school as seen in the schemes in different parts of the country. It was clearly evident that the total integration of school type education for young people with adult leisure education in the same premises at the same time demands such excellent team management and understanding of values by those in charge as well as very well planned facilities in order to be successful that the task might be too demanding. Each of the schemes mentioned supported the theory that once committed to providing a community/shared facilities centre for all ages and demands, it is the management set-up which then becomes absolutely important. Members from the wider community must be deeply involved in the management of the centre in order that the real needs of the community are met.

The main conclusions drawn from the study of 'shared facilities' may be summarised as follows:-

1. In each case of a 'shared facilities' scheme studied or observed, a clear advantage was seen in terms of a high degree of contact with parents, compared with that noted in Enquiry 1. When the school assumes the

mantle or adopts some or all of the philosophy of the Community School, there are significantly greater opportunities for all kinds of contacts with parents in the locality than in those schools which close down at 4.00 p.m.

2. The schools studied showed that a high percentage of parents had contact with the school concerning their child's educational progress, and although there is no evidence, this could well be related to 'shared facilities'.
3. A high percentage of the parents indicated satisfaction with the arrangements to see the Head or teachers. Many indicated that they were happy with the arrangements for contacting the school although they had not visited the school. Although, again, there is no evidence, experience has shown that this type of goodwill is forthcoming from parents more readily when the school opens its doors to the wider community.
4. An overwhelming support for community use of the school when not needed by staff and pupils was discovered, although many parents and some children did not use the facility.
5. Broad educational value was gained through contact at varying age levels together with the provision for recreational and physical development. There was evidence of support for the school, not only from

parents but representatives of the wider community surrounding the school. The school was found to be approachable, i.e. anti-social behaviour of pupils in the evening, at weekends or during holiday periods freely and quite amicably reported to the school for mutual benefit.

6. Of special interest was the large number of parents who felt they should not be involved in the running of the school, although many of these were fully committed to involvement in the community activities.
7. Some criticism was still evident of the methods used by the schools for the reporting of pupils' progress. As shown in the Schools Council Report, "Young School Leavers", a gap still exists between the school and parents on this issue.
8. It was also evident that community connections with the school do not always overcome incidents of personal dissatisfaction.

Although it can be assumed that attitudes have changed since 1964, it is suggested that the widespread and rather horrifying blockage in the channels of communication which often exist between secondary schools and homes, as expressed by Jackson and Marsden, is somewhat minimised in schools which encourage the philosophy of 'shared facilities' in all its facets as opposed to schools which are not open to the community and operate traditional school hours. There is little evidence to indicate any marked correlation between

parent-school contact associated with social class within the 'shared use' schemes although the school draws from a very varied social mix.

The subjective nature of the interpretation of the data obtained in the survey is acknowledged and others may wish to interpret the findings in different ways, yet what did emerge from the study was a positive indication that parents were interested in the way in which the school was being run and were prepared to involve themselves in several aspects of the life of the school.

In considering the cost benefit of shared facilities there is undoubtedly a very clear advantage in much heavier usage of extensive specialist facilities and, indeed, of all the plant available in a community complex. It may well be in the majority of cases that the economic argument was the decisive one in the initial implementation. The other justifications and aspects of philosophy could be no more than post-hoc rationalisation. It is not suggested that this is morally wrong, but that it might be more honest and less pious to give this aspect the prominence it perhaps merits.

There is a suggestion that in those shared use schemes which had developed gradually (in response to community need rather than been purpose-built), a real danger existed of stifling community initiative. The fact that life could become too easy as an affiliated group with ready access to facilities could remove the driving force from many groups which had flourished over a long period of time. In those which were purpose-built and lavish in their provision for community activities there could be a strong

temptation to pull all local groups into the building on the premise that the spending of large sums of money must be justified by adequate use of the facilities provided.

In consideration of the very important philosophical reasons expressed in the study in support of the concept of 'shared facilities', it needs to be acknowledged that the purpose-built community school, even with the most lavish provision of financial resource must of necessity contain many significant compromises. It is extremely difficult to provide all things to all people and the compromise might well mean a poor deal for any constituent part of the whole.

An examination of the concept of 'shared facilities' locally, nationally and internationally suggests that there is still a formidable gap in understanding between home and school and real collaboration is difficult to achieve. It is suggested that if the school can tap the strengths and remedy some of the weaknesses of its immediate area, a school may nurture a community spirit and hence an awareness of civic responsibility.

Apart from the obvious objective of any school, which is to educate its pupils, one of the basic aims of the community school should be to promote closer relationships between teachers, pupils, parents and other users in the belief that such relationships can be both enjoyable and productive.

CHAPTER 7

SUMMING UP

Bearing in mind that the concept of "shared facilities" emerged in an era of educational experiment and innovation, it is perhaps not surprising that it was initially received with almost euphoric enthusiasm by some educationalists. However, perhaps because of the lack of more definite national guidelines, shared facilities schemes appear to have developed somewhat haphazardly. Whereas new teaching methods and changes in the organisation of schools were planned and prepared for with teachers being trained or re-trained in an effort to ensure success, there is some evidence of special teacher training for working in "shared use" schemes and a few signs of preparatory work with parents, governors, ancillary staff and other members of the community. Although much more needed to be done, this lack of preparation has created a number of technical problems and sometimes conflict between teachers and community users of the school. Perhaps we need to accept that this may happen among groups whose interests are different, and learn how to manage this conflict, indeed perhaps to use it as a creative force.

Some of the difficulties arise from local authority methods of control, for instance the sometimes ill-defined partnership between Adult Education, Youth and Community and School-based Education. Further difficulties are caused through insufficient inter-communication and separate funding among the various services provided for the community.

The danger that the "shared facilities" concept of education is being pushed forward for reasons associated with cost effectiveness; the wider use of school plant, greater use of school buildings in the current situation of falling rolls, is accepted and constant. What is variable is the nature of the commitment on the part of educationalists, teachers and administrators. Whereas some authorities appear to have a sincere commitment to the educational value of "shared use", others although paying lip service to this philosophy are possibly motivated by more materialistic considerations.

Although there is a fair amount of literature concerning the need for closer contact between the school and the community, a significant factor in making this survey has been the restricted nature of the literature to which reference could be made. Much of the information that exists is in the form of articles to various educational journals or collections of papers produced in an edited form. Few descriptions of community schools in action have been written and there is an apparent need for further research into the workings of such schools. In particular there is a need for a close examination of the management of "shared use" schemes.

The study has shown that in the same way that local education authorities have developed their "shared use" schemes in different ways, management organisation also differs. In particular there is some confusion in the minds of teachers, parents and other users of "shared use" schemes as to the roles and responsibilities of the management committee in relation to those of the school governors. The ultimate success of "shared use" schemes depends heavily on the understanding and appreciation of their roles by all the participant

groups within the organisation and in particular an awareness of the educational opportunities provided by the wider use of school plant together with a sympathy for each other's needs and responsibilities.

This has become evident within South Tyneside where a number of difficulties have arisen through prejudiced interpretations of the term "shared use". It would appear that some conflicts have arisen through the very use of this term and in particular the description of a complex as a "School and Community Association". The fact that the necessary understanding does not automatically attend the operating of a "shared use" scheme and that personality factors strongly influence its success or otherwise supports the suggestion that a need exists for preparatory training.

While seeking the benefits to be derived from such organisations it is necessary not to blind ourselves to the difficulties which have yet to be overcome in the development of the community school. If the goals set by those committed to the further development of these schools, with the community involvement envisaged by the Taylor Report, are to be achieved, certain changes of attitude will be required. In particular it is essential that in addition to schemes for teacher training, local management courses should be set up and, vitally important in promoting community control, national guidelines with particular reference to curriculum control, staffing and conditions of service should be laid down to avoid the dangers sometimes apparent in the local political scene. Community control could work to disadvantage: an articulate, confident minority might be able to use this advantage to impose their preferences on the majority. It would therefore be wise to stress the desirability of community participation rather than control and the need to balance the rights and responsibilities

of participants in the educational process - teachers, governors, parents and elected representatives in national and local government. It can be assumed that community schools which establish a sympathetic partnership with local people, parents and others, can develop a more effective educational service, an increased feeling of community and derive confidence and support from the communities in which they are located.

The study of "shared facilities" indicates that provision may be made for education from the cradle to the grave. Although desirable, it is not essential that the community school should be a purpose-built institution, but a school concerned with individual development. Henry Morris neatly referred to "the place where life is lived".

A better understanding of and support for the school is obtained through the open door policy of "shared facilities" schemes. This encourages parents into the school and provides open access to information about the content of courses and teaching methods in the belief that if parents become more interested in their children's education this will enhance educational achievement. Particularly important is the additional resource available to the school which follows an open and welcoming policy to parents and other adults who have much to offer in terms of skills and experience. Finally it is suggested that an open ended commitment to community involvement should provide a fertile environment:

- to foster good relationships between pupils and staff;
- to strengthen links between home and school;
- to help improve educational standards;
- to attempt to lessen indiscipline, truancy and delinquency;

to harness the experience and expertise of local
people;

to encourage community participation in running
the affairs of the neighbourhood; and

to provide a focal point for community development.

ADDENDUM

The survey has identified areas which could perhaps bear further investigation. One such area is to question whether the opening of a school to the wider community enhances the educational opportunity of the pupils: is the school curriculum influenced in any way and if so is it possible to assess the benefits to the pupils? Another is to investigate the extent to which mixing of pupils and adults occurs during the day in schools operating shared facilities schemes and what advantage, if any, is derived from this.

The extent of parental involvement could be documented in an attempt to discover how effective increased involvement is in enhancing the achievement of the pupils and in providing an active rather than a token commitment to the management and general life of the school. Arising from this is the question whether involvement in the sharing of facilities really does bring in parents who would not normally be in contact with the school, or does it simply attract parents who would in any case be predisposed to consider the school favourably? Do a significant number of parents or teachers gain from the opportunity for improved and wider channels of communication between school and home? A method of testing such hypotheses may be by comparing a school involved in a shared facilities programme with one which follows a traditional school day.

An important area for investigation could be the responsibilities of and the requirements from management in a shared facilities scheme. Much scope still remains in preparing the way for the further development of the sharing of facilities; particularly in the training of

teachers and in preparatory work with parents and governors. The partnership is often ill-defined and sometimes leads to conflict. Further research into the rights and responsibilities of the participants in the educational process in the school - teachers, parents, governors and other interested groups could be helpful, with the emphasis on community participation rather than control. Methods of management may differ widely with problems arising from the variety of views held by the participant groups. If there is to be greater community involvement, and if the organisations are to be run for the benefit of the community in co-operation with the community, there would appear to be a need for a re-structuring of management. The mechanistic system of the past, although suited to a system where there is a clear definition of assigned roles, with a built-in system of checks and supervision may need to be replaced by an organic structure to meet the challenge of new and unfamiliar problems.

APPENDICES

HEDWORTHFIELD SECONDARY SCHOOL

Dear Parent,

In providing the best social and academic setting for your child it is important that we find out all we can about your views and opinion of the work of the school.

For several years the school has been used beyond normal school hours for youth and community activities, and I am interested in finding out how you view this usage and whether it has any effects upon your contact and communication with the school.

It would be most helpful to me if you could find the time to fill in the questionnaire, the results of which will be carefully considered when planning for the future.

Thanking you in anticipation for your help and support.

Yours sincerely,

Father

<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>

Please tick

Mother

How many of your children go to Hedworthfield Secondary School?

--

1

2

3

4

Please show their sex and year group

Year 1

Year 2

Year 3

Year 4

Year 5

Girls	Boys

A.

1. How many times have you visited the school for educational reasons: reports, homework, examinations, careers?

Have not visited the school

One visit to the school

Two visits to the school

Three or more visits to the school

2. Have you visited the school for reasons concerned with attendance, misbehaviour, complaints?

Have not visited the school

One visit to the school

Two visits to the school

Three or more visits to the school

3. How many times have you visited the school for Community Association activities?

Have not visited the school

One visit to the school

Two visits to the school

Three or more visits to the school

A.

4. What do you think of the arrangements for parents to see the Head or Teachers? Are you quite happy with the present arrangements or not?

Please tick

Completely happy with the present arrangements

Not happy with the present arrangements

If not completely happy write down how you feel the arrangements could be improved.

.....

5. After a visit to the school when your child's progress or welfare has been discussed, do you come away feeling:-

Please tick

You have wasted your time

You have a slightly better understanding

You have a much better understanding

It was well worth taking the trouble to go

6. Would you please indicate by a tick in the following columns how the school deals with the following:-

	Very Well	Well	Quite Well	Not well enough
Informing you about your child's progress				
Welcoming you although you arrive without an appointment				
Allowing you to speak to a particular teacher				
Your wish to explain to them anything important concerning your child				

B.

1. The school is now used for other activities as well as teaching. Please answer the following:-

Please tick

I agree with using the school for activities other than teaching

☐

I disagree with using the school for activities other than teaching

☐

2. If you have ticked (1) please tick which of the following uses of the school you agree with:-

Senior Citizens, Ladies' Section, Men's Club

Tuesday Tea Club, Child Clinic

Cubs, Scouts, Guides, Army Cadets

Classes for cake decorating, dressmaking, etc.

Yoga, Slimming Clubs, Dancing Classes

Evening Classes, French, Mathematics, English, etc.

Sport, Badminton, Squash, Football, Keep Fit

Dances, Pie and Pea Suppers, Socials

3. Do you feel that the opening of the school to the Community:-

Benefits your child

Makes no difference

Your child is worse off

Please give a reason for your choice.

.....

.....

.....

.....

B.

4. The school arranges the functions listed below. Please tick those you have attended. If none, please indicate.

Open days/evenings to check your
youngster's progress

Prize giving/speech days

Sports days/swimming galas

School plays/concerts/carols

Careers meetings

Jumble sales/bazaars

None attended

5. Are you a member of the Community Association? Please tick:

Yes

No

6. The Community Association arranged the following activities. Please tick if you have attended any of these.

Social evenings, dances

Outings, 'bus trips, theatre visits

Sporting activities, swimming, squash, bowls

Evening classes/leisure activities

Evening classes/educational

None attended

B.

7. Have you visited the school for a reason not listed above?
Please tick:

Yes

No

If the answer is 'Yes' please write down the reasons.

.....
.....

8. Do you think a Community Association should:

Please tick

Organise recreational activities, clubs, classes

Work for services to the neighbourhood, clinic,
'bus services, etc.

Organise money-raising efforts for the school

Have a say in the running of the school

BOLDON COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL

Dear Parent,

I am carrying out an investigation into the development of the community school in the United Kingdom, and in particular in South Tyneside. The new school at Boldon was built with "shared use" in mind, and for several years the school has been used beyond normal school hours for Youth and Community activities. I am interested in finding out how you view this usage and whether it has had any effect upon your contact and communication with the school.

It would be most helpful to me if you could find the time to fill in the questionnaire.

Thank you in anticipation of your help and support.

Yours sincerely,

Father

<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>

Please tick

Mother

How many of your children go to Boldon Comprehensive School?

--	--	--	--

1

2

3

4

Please show their sex and year group

	Girls	Boys
Year 1		
Year 2		
Year 3		
Year 4		
Year 5		

A.

1. How many times have you visited the school for educational reasons: examinations, careers, progress reports?

Have not visited the school

One visit to the school

Two visits to the school

Three or more visits to the school

2. Have you visited the school for reasons concerned with attendance, misbehaviour, complaints?

Have not visited the school

One visit to the school

Two visits to the school

Three or more visits to the school

3. Have you visited the school for a reason not listed above?
Please tick:

Yes

No

If the answer is 'Yes' please write down the reasons.

.....
.....

A.

4. The school arranges the functions listed below. Please tick those you have attended. If none, please indicate.

Open days/evenings to check your
youngster's progress

Prize giving/speech days

Sports days/swimming galas

School plays/concerts/carols

Careers meetings

Jumble sales/bazaars

None attended

5. What do you think of the arrangements for parents to see the Head or Teachers? Are you quite happy with the present arrangements or not?

Please tick

Completely happy with the present arrangements

Fairly happy with the present arrangements

Not happy with the present arrangements

Very unhappy with the present arrangements

If not completely happy write down how you feel the arrangements could be improved.

.....
.....
.....

A.

6. After a visit to the school when your child's progress or welfare has been discussed, do you come away feeling:-

Please tick

You have wasted your time

You have a slightly better understanding

You have a much better understanding

It was well worth taking the trouble to go

7. Would you please indicate by a tick in the following columns how you feel the school deals with the following:-

Informing you about your child's progress

Welcoming you although you arrive without an appointment

Allowing you to speak to a particular teacher

Your wish to explain to them anything important concerning your child

Very Well	Well	Quite Well	Not well enough

B.

1. The school is now used for other activities as well as teaching. Please answer the following:-

Please tick

I strongly agree with using the school
for activities other than teaching

☐

I agree on the whole with using the school
for activities other than teaching

☐

I disagree on the whole with using the school
for activities other than teaching

☐

I strongly disagree with using the school
for activities other than teaching

☐

2. How many times have you visited the school for Community Association activities?

Have not visited the school

One visit to the school

Two visits to the school

Three or more visits to the school

3. Are you a member of the Parent-Teacher Association?

Yes

No

What do you think the work of a parent-teacher association
should be?

.....
.....
.....

B.

4. If you agree with the school being used for activities other than teaching, please number, in order of importance, the uses you agree with:

Senior Citizens, Ladies' Section, Men's Club

Cubs, Scouts, Guides, Army Cadets

Classes for cake decorating, dressmaking, etc.

Yoga, Slimming Clubs, Dancing Classes

Evening Classes, French, Mathematics, English, etc.

Sport, Badminton, Squash, Football, Keep Fit

Dances, Pie & Pea Suppers, Socials

5. Do you feel that the opening of the school to the community:

Please tick

Benefits your child

Makes no difference

Your child is worse off

Child does not attend

Please give a reason for your choice.

.....

B.

6. Are you a member of the Community Association?

Yes

No

If you have ticked 'Yes' please indicate the groups you are a member of.

Ladies' Section

Indoor Bowls

Family Swimming Club

Badminton Club

Squash Club

Dancing Group

Others - please name:

.....

7. The Community Association arranged the following activities. Please tick if you have attended any of these.

Social evenings, dances

Outings, 'bus trips, theatre visits

Sporting activities, swimming, squash, bowls

Evening classes/leisure activities

Evening classes/educational

None attended

8. Do you think a Community Association should:

Please tick

Organise recreational activities, clubs, classes

Work for services to the neighbourhood, clinic,
 'bus services, etc.

Organise money-raising efforts for the school

Have a say in the running of the school

Cambridgeshire 50 Years On: The Village Colleges Today
An International Conference, October 1980

A college for the community or a community of the college?

This is the question that may be posed to the Cambridgeshire Colleges of today. The danger of a philosophy which was advanced at the time of its conception now being stagnant and the participants complacent was a debating point at a conference held to review fifty years of community school development in Cambridgeshire.

Henry Morris, the entrepreneur of community college thinking and a man of vision, was also a man of his times. Has the community college philosophy of Cambridgeshire kept abreast of the times? There was a suggestion at the conference that the circumstances of the clients of a number of the colleges have changed and that the provision in the main is now catering for those with least need, in the physical terms of the services.

Morris hoped to achieve his ideal of an improved quality of life through educational provision from the cradle to the grave, not through the rather narrow interpretation of an educational service of instruction but by a wider interpretation, that of educational experience. This was to come through sharing educational provision with pupils, appreciating the value of relationships between groups within the community and using the physical resources of the school to enhance opportunities for leisure.

Primary community schools are a more recent innovation in Cambridgeshire and developed in villages which did not have a community college base. The approach to the community was simple

and direct: This is your school. Please become interested and involved and use the facility as you require it. In the first instance programmes were developed with the aim of bringing in members of the community but eventually the community indicated their needs themselves: badminton, drama and a group meeting place. Parents and other community users were invited to participate in assemblies and in some schools to act as support staff in, for example, an activity afternoon where adults work with children in knitting, pottery and painting.

The community primary school was not regarded as a challenge to the community college but as an additional resource. They worked closely with the community colleges and in at least one college and feeder primary school the links between their junior and secondary stages of education were greatly strengthened and enhanced.

It became evident that in parts of Cambridgeshire where the character of the villages was changing with an increased number of affluent residents, a danger existed of a division within the community of the school between "those with" and "those without". In an effort to break down these differences and promote a tolerance and understanding of the different financial circumstances of different groups within the community, the community use of the school was enlarged. It was also hoped that an understanding of the work of the school would lead to confidence on the part of the aspirant parent. The booklet, "Community Primary Schools of Cambridgeshire", opines that by opening the doors of the village primary school to parents and other adult members of the

community, a greater rapport will be established between all users which will give teachers enormously enhanced opportunities of influencing children in fundamental areas of attitude and behaviour.

Debate during the period of the conference indicated an awareness on the part of the staffs of community colleges that too rigid an interpretation of the 1930s philosophy of Henry Morris may now be outdated and that possibly a review of the role of the community college is required. The community college was often referred to in separate terms of "school" and "college", the latter referring to the evening activities, suggesting two separate identities. The "users" committee was called the "Student Association", suggesting a very heavy emphasis on the adult education aspect of the Cambridgeshire community colleges. Did this programme fulfil the educational provision advocated by Morris of cradle to grave support, much less adhere too rigidly to his philosophies?

Visits to several colleges confirmed the previously stated view that not only is there no national blueprint for community colleges, but certainly none exists for Cambridgeshire. Each college has translated the philosophy of Morris according to the policy of its warden and the needs of its catchment area. Some have slavishly followed the Morris doctrine as preached fifty years ago with little deviation from that traditional path; others have struggled to compromise between that philosophy and the changing social situation in which they find themselves and at least two are facing this challenge and attempting to interpret the philosophy in the light of present day community circumstances.

In 1974 Cambridgeshire issued an official policy statement on community education in the county. This suggested that the establishment of "Community Education" signalled a new approach to helping individuals and community or interest groups to meet their social, recreational and educational needs.

In line with the thinking of Henry Morris, a discussion paper presented to the Secondary and Further Education Committee in November 1978 stated that the overall philosophy of community education must be the improvement of "the quality of life" for all members of the community. The paper reaffirmed that the integrated approach to community education in Cambridgeshire was based largely on the development of community schools and colleges.

At the conference Professor Kerensky warned of the danger of viewing community education as a programme designed to attack our social problems. "We must maintain the view that it is a strategy for educational need." He suggested that every school could become every man's "country club". People join clubs for many reasons: a sense of inclusion or fellowship, of affiliation and belonging; a sense of recognition; a sense of control. He highlighted the need for review of the work of schools in relation to skills required for the 1980s and suggested that schools need to link more closely with other community agencies. He said that we live in a society where the young learn from the old and the old from the young. Schools should consider a wider community use for educational, ecological and financial reasons.

What is a community school? This is a question which is not resolved by the study nor yet by the conference. Both give interpretations of community schools operating in England and Wales. Schools may be primarily centres of academic education where youngsters prepare for adult life. In this they are not only preparing for employment, they are also preparing to become adult members of the local community. Comprehensive education makes wholehearted local integration a realistic possibility. Community education can be viewed as a means of extending this role.

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